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TO NAME OF THE PARTY.

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SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996

THE BIG TEASE Joe Joseph's end of year Quiz

TODAY in on THE ACT

Paul Heiney on how animals stole the nativity show WEEKEND



EVITA AND ME Eva Peron

Simon Jenkins on why he loves PAGE 16

Your Christmas AND NEW YEAR TELEVISION AND RADIO GUIDE

MONDAY THE TIMES FOR ONLY EVERY MONDAY

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Fiancé stabbed 37 times, court told

Bail appeal in road rage murder case

BY DANIEL MCGRORY

A JUDGE will be asked on Monday to free Tracie Andrews, the former model charged with the murder of

Miss Andrews was granted conditional bail yesterday by magistrates who were told that she stabbed Lee Harvey 37 times and then lied that he had been the victim of a road rage" attack.

Details of the case against Miss Andrews, who was remanded in custody pending the outcome of a prosecution challenge to the decision to grant bail, emerged after her solicitor took the highly un-usual step of asking for reporting restrictions to be lifted.

Tim Robinson claimed the case against his client was weak and tenuous" - Miss Andrews sat pale throughout the three hour hearing during which it was said she had threatened a previous boyfriend and Mr Harvey with knives, and had hit her fiance with a bottle and punched him in the face.

Magistrates originally agreed that Miss Andrews should be allowed bail so that she could be at home for Christmas with her six-year-old daughter. But the prosecution argued Miss Andrews might try to commit suicide, as she had done days after giving a tearful televised press conference of her graphic account of what she still maintains was a racially motivated road rage

attack. Since taking a drug over-dose, she had been in a secure psychiatric hospital, but her solicitor said she now deeply regretted the suicide attempt and was intent only in clear-

While she was taken to Eastwood Park Womens Prison in Gloucester for the weekend Mr Robinson attacked police attempts to find wit-

particularly the Cotswolds

http://www.the-times.co.uk



Tracie Andrews: "had turbulent relationship



Lee Harvey: "they had an 'argument''

nesses as "sub-standard" and said her drug overdose should not be seen "as an act of guilt". He conceded the couple had a turbulent relationship, but said: "He is the last person in the world that she would have

deliberately killed." Mr Robinson said he had agreed to lift the normally strict reporting procedures in the hope the publicity might "lead to someone coming for-

ward to identify the real

killers". The prosecution portrayed Miss Andrews's press conference as a deliberate fiction and said how, after a row in the car during which Mr Harvey hit

her, Miss Andrews stabbed him in the neck, face, back, head and upper body. Two main arteries were severed in the attack, said police.

Miss Andrews, who works as a barmaid in the Worcestershire village of Alevchurch, where the couple lived, was found standing over the body covered in blood.

Yesterday she spoke only once to confirm her name and address. She heard Kerry Moreton, for the prosecution, describe how just before lipm on December I, police found Mr Harvey's body in the road at Coopers Hill, which is a short distance from the couple's home.

A visitor to a nearby cottage found Miss Andrews with cuts and bruises to her face. But no witnesses have come forward to say they saw the Ford Sierra car Miss Andrews claims was the murder.

Miss Moreton said: "The reason she is charged with murder is that there is sufficient evidence in the view of the police and the prosecution to contradict her explanation and say she was the murderer and not someone in a Sierra."

A clump of hair, which matched Miss Andrews's own, had been found close to her fiance's hand and three or four similar hairs were discovered in his fist.

Miss Moreton said: "They had an argument Mr Harvey may have struck Miss Andrews, but she then pulled a knife on him."

The couple had a domestic row earlier about Mr Harvey's daughter and witnesses in a pub spoke of the couple arguing that evening.

Miss Moreton said Miss
Andrews had told police how

the black woollen hat they found in their Escort car was a Continued on page 2, col 5



Emma Gifford leaving home yesterday morning for the Central Criminal Court

Baby killer gets probation

THE daughter of a retired chief executive of the Rank Organisation who killed her newborn son after giving birth alone and in secret in her Kensington flat was put on probation vesterday after pleading guilty to infanticide.

"In a situation such as this the law does not wish to punish," Sir Lawrence Verney, the Recorder of London, told Emma Gifford, 22. The law wished to help because help was still required.

The circumstances of this birth could not have been more lonely for you and what occurred immediately afterwards, although it must cause you great remorse, is not something which should be allowed to cloud your life for

the whole of the future." William Boyce, for the prosecution, told the court how Gifford, from Ashford, Kent, admitted to police that she had given birth at between 2am and 3am last April 6 and had agonised over her future until 5pm the next day when she was expected at work. Mr Boyce said: "She felt as though she had no option. She didn't know what to do. So she placed a flannel, which she

had used to clean the child,

over his face." The court heard that Gifford had suffered from depression since the age of 13.

Rebecca Poulet, QC, for the dience, said: "Her mother is an alcoholic and as a result her childhood, adolescence and later teens were extremely disturbed. She was persistently abused and developed an obedient and pleasing personality to assuage trouble."

Gifford pleaded not guilty to a second charge of trying to conceal the birth, and agreed to a course of treatment as a condition of her probation.

Hidden trauma, page 5

James and Alice: names that Snow forecast for the South put you ahead of the game Snow flurries and a bitterly cold wind are forecast for high ground in the South.

By ALAN HAMILTON AND ARTHUR SNELL

and Chilterns. Much of the rest of the SORRY, Thomas and Charcountry will have an overcast lotte, you are last year's you have been day with rain or drizzle and usurped by James and Alice. sleet in places, although it will But don't throw your teddy be brighter and drier in the bears out of your prams; blame your parents for being North The London Weather Centre says the East Coast is into aspirational naming. the best bet for a white This year's favourite names Page 20

for the newborn are taken from a survey of nearly 4,000 birth announcements published in The Times during the past twelve months. James, runner-up last year, takes top place from Thomas, the male favourite since 1993. Farther down the chart, a new entry at No 8 is Harry, which has come from nowhere. Oliver and Charles have slipped, while Edward has The Times on the Internet

surged three places. Parents are constant in their choice of boys' names: James, Thomas, William and Alexander have been the four most popular choices throughout the 1990s, in one order or another. But the naming of girls is a more volatile science. Among the ladies, Alice has

shot to the top from fifth position last year, while Char-lotte has tumbled from pole position to mere sixth place. Charjotte, last year's winner, jumped ten places to reach that position, only to fall again to sixth. Alice, this year's female winner, rose from fifth place, while Eleanor is down from sixth to thirteen, and Harriet and Katherine have emerged to

joint seventh place. If homophonic spellings were counted as one name, the picture would be quite different. Were the Hispanic Isabella - tenth this year combined with the less popu-

lar Isobel, their joint effort would probably top the girls list. Similarly, if Katherine joint seventh - were to join forces with the umplaced Catherine, they would make a much better showing. Catherine was third in 1994, disappeared last year and has now resurfaced with a K. Royal names have declined

in popularity over the past 30 years. In 1966, Charles, Andrew and Edward were all in the top ten as were Elizabeth, Anne and Margaret. Birth notices are yet

another indication that readers of The Times are ahead of the game. The names they choose do not reflect overail trends, but their choices tend to gain wider popularity a few years later. The most recent survey of babies' names taken from the NHS central register shows Jack and Jessica to be the currently most popular names for babies nationwide. In The Times list, Jack fell from tenth to eleventh this year, while poor Jessica languishes at twentietis.

Swimming officials ban starting pistols

By Craig Lord

barred from swimming com-petitions in the wake of the Dunblane massacre and the subsequent ban on handguns above .22 calibre.

Officials from the Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain decided that the use of starting pistols, which fire blanks, was "inappropriate", and they are to be gradually phased out in the next few months.

Races at the British championships in Sheffield this week were being started with a klaxon, but its raucous bark is considered inefficient compared with the crack of a starting pistol, and officials have begun the search for a suitable alternative.

David Sparkes, the federation's secretary, estimates that about 2,000 pistols are held by swimming clubs, adding: We're not saying they're necessarily dangerous, but in the current climate we ask whether children really need to see guns at the poolside. We think not. They are a potential

STARTING pistols are to be hazard and there are dangers of guns being stolen and used in robberies and so on. We believe we are acting responsibly in drawing up a plan to phase out starting pistols."

Mr Sparkes said there was an opportunity for an inventor to come up with an alternative. "What we need is a small hand-held device with a loud buzz. I should think that's well within the bounds of tech-Although the pistols cannot

fire a projectile, swimmers have been startled to see starters waving guns across the pool lanes as they threaten competitors with imminent disqualification.

There have been several cases of starters singeing their trousers when misfiring their

In the 1950s Eddie Woollard, a Hertfordshire official, accidentally fired a gun down his trouser leg. "It was very amusing to see the smoke rising from his pants," said Kelvin Juba, an official at this week's championships.

BUSINESS NEWS 21-24 **WEEKEND MONEY..25-30**

GARDENING: WEEKEND.... 4, 5 PROPERTY: WEEKEND... 6, 7 TRAVEL: WEEKEND 13-18

Cabinet picks troubleshooter as millennium chief resigns

By Arthur Leathley and Alexandra Frean

THE minister charged with sorting out the beef crisis is the leading contender to take over organisation of the millennium exhibition which is threatening to turn into a similar

A Cabinet "troubleshooter" will be drafted in to oversee the £700 million event which was thrown into fresh confusion yesterday with the resignation of the executive in charge after just three months

in the job. Senior government figures indicated yesterday that Roger Freeman, the public service minister who was drafted in to coordinate the Government's response to the BSE crisis. would take over from Barry Hartop, chief executive of Millennium Central.

Mr Hartop said that his departure was in keeping with his three-month contract but senior figures at the Millennium Commission suggested that he had intended to extend his contract but had become disillusioned by the lack of progress on the scheme.

The Government has now decided to take control of bition, intended to be the highlight of the 2000 millennium celebrations.

Millennium Central, the private company charged with putting together a business plan for the project, is to become a public body with ministers preparing to underwrite the event to boost business confidence.

The private sector has guaranteed only one third of the £150 million expected in sponsorship and senior ministers are alarmed at suggestions that large companies are

backing away from the project

at such an early stage. Michael Heseltine, the Dep uty Prime Minister, is understood to have agreed that a Cabinet heavyweight is required to restore some credi-bility to the project. Mr Freeman is considered by

colleagues to be the leading contender, having helped to defuse the beef row when it threatened to get out of con-Government figures made

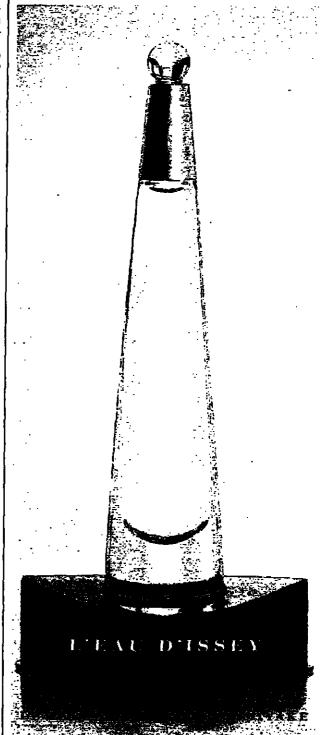
clear yesterday that Millennium Central's new status as a quango, with the Government being the sole shareholder, would mean it would have to be overseen by a minister. It is considered that Virginia Bottomley, as National Heritage Secretary, would face a conflict of interest and Mr

Heseltine will be increasingly engaged with Conservative campaigning in the run-up to the general election. The exhibition, to be staged in Greenwich, south-east

London, has prompted bitter argument between senior Labour and Tory figures, with Labour refusing to sanction a write the event from lotters money. Mr Heseltine has made

clear that a decision on funding the project must be made early in the new year. He has said that ministers will put an order to the Commons, extending beyond 2000 the period that the Millennium Commission is allowed to receive lottery funding. The commission receives

about £250 million annually and Mr Heseltine has indicated that the Government might Continued on page 2, col 5



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The Columnist

of the Year

Starts the

arts week

Major hopes attack on Labour will draw fire

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN MAJOR tried to put Conservative infighting over Europe behind him last night by turning his fire on the threat to the economy posed by Labour's European policies. The Prime Minister fought to shift attention from his party's internal troubles by delivering a seathing attack on Labour's threat to jobs, low taxation,

prosperity and export success. Seizing on this week's fall in unemployment and an independent report that forecast huge economic growth in Britain, Mr Major warned voters not to throw away the chance of prosperity by electing a Labour

He used a keynote speech on the economy to herald a new year campaign by ministers aimed at targeting the potential dangers of a Blair-led administration.

In a stark warning to those voters who considered it was "time for a change", he said that the general election result would determine the economic future of Britain.

Next year. Britain will go to the polls. People will have their democratic opportunity to decide if they wish to do away with the Government that has enabled British people to build their success or choose opposed all the ingredients of Britain's success.'

Tory strategists are building a campaign intended to expose Labour's twin weaknesses of the economy and Europe. The attack on Labour's economic background is timed to undermine the announcement, expected early next year, of Gordon Brown's tax plans.

Mr Major told the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce: "I know what some might say: 'Isn't it time for a change? Well, as long as you have progress, why bother to change? Britain's success is too valuable, too important to all of us to be put at

instead the policies of those who have risk." He said Labour "could no more preserve the success of the British economy today than they could have helped to create it in the first place." Mr Major said Labour had opposed every change — on privatisation, on union reforms, on public spending curbs and on taxation - that the

> Tories had proposed. Mr Major pointed to this week's fall in unemployment, the largest for 25 years, "the glowing OECD report that put the British economy top of the class. You know that Britain's economic success isn't thanks to big benevolent governments telling you what to do."

Ministers believe that, having

make a decision on the single currency before the election, the party should campaign more aggressively on Europe by underlining clear differences between the Conservatives and Labour.

Robin Cook, Labour's Foreign Secretary, accused Mr Major of being unable to unite his own party on Europe. He said: "John Major is a weak leader and the leader of a

divided party.
"No-one will be impressed by his claims over Europe. The record shows he never gets his way, that he constantly fails Britain and fails Britain's interests."

Minister claims victory on fish quotas after all-night talks

AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

TONY BALDRY, the Fisheries Minister, claimed victory yesterday after striking a deal that will keep Britain's fish quotas next year at virtually the same level overall as in

The 21-hour talks in Brussels were so gruelling that Emma Bonino, the European Fisheries Commisioner, collapsed and was unable to attend the closing press conference. "She is exhausted," her spokesman said. Mr Baldry said all-night talks

He said that he had achieved all Britain's objectives and that overall fish quotas would be just half a percentage point down on last year. He estimated that British fishermen would be £16 million better off in 1997 than they would have been had all the quota cuts pro-posed by Brussels been accepted. "Given where negotiations started, that is a considerable achievement.

Ulster Unionists, Northern Irish fishermen and Tory backbenchers indicated last night that Mr Baldry's deal was acceptable. William Ross, the Unionists' fisheries spokesman, said: "It seems from first reports that Northern Ireland has come out of it as well as can be expected."

The deal appeared to have removed any immediate threat of the nine Ulster Unionist MPs in the Commons refusing to vote with the Government in the new year

WEST OF SCOTLAND NORTH SEA -12.9+30 49,000 54,860 WEST OF IRELAND 1996 1997 1,400 IRISH SEA

HOW BRITAIN'S FISHING QUOTAS HAVE CHANGED

and possibly forcing an early general election. The Union-ists had fired a warning shot across the Government's bows by abstaining in the fisheries vote in the Commons on

Paul Leeman, chairman of the Northern Ireland Fish Producers' Organisation, said: "Mr Baldry has done well. The result is not as bad as we expected. There is no doubt that the deal would have been much less satisfactory without the pressure exerted by the Ulster Unionists."

Although Northern Irish fishermen will have to accept a 25 per cent drop in the plaice catch in the Irish Sea, they will

benefit from a 28 per cent increase in the herring quota. Cod, whiting and prawn quotas in the Irish Sea will remain at about this year's level or slightly above.

Mr Baldry, who had denied at the start of the negotiations that he was under pressure from the Ulster Unionists to secure special concessions for Ulster fishermen, said he had done "no more and no less" for them than for any other

Barrie Deas, chief executive of the National Federation of Fisherman's Organisations, said: "Mr Baldry has secured some important improvements and mitigated some damaging cuts but there is still a lot of pain." A cut of 22 per cent in the North Sea sole quota was "savage", he said.

Mr Baldry said the reduction in the North Sea sole catch was necessary to prevent stocks collapsing and damaging the fishing industry in the long term. He pointed out that the European Commission, on scientific advice, had asked for a reduction of 48 per cent.

The whiting quota will go up by 11 per cent in the North Sea and by 30 per cent west of Scotland, and the haddock quota in waters west of Ire-land, the South West, the English Channel and the Irish Sea will double, albeit from a low base. Filippo di Robilant. spokesman for Emma Bonino, said the Commission could live with the fish catches agreed yesterday.

It is satisfactory. This year has been a good year for fish," he said. "This does not mean that we can go and plunder because next year could be

European Union ministers also agreed to set up a satellite monitoring system by June 1998 to combat the problem of illegal fishing. All boats that are more than 24 merres in length will have to install tracking equipment, for which member states will get 100 per cent funding from the EU.

work in the West Country. In 1992, Robinson's took the

unusual step of withdrawing

from the Legal Aid Board's

duty solicitor scheme when

Mr Robinson criticised the

administrative chaos and

complained that some suspects were waiting in police cells for up to five hours before

Instead the firm set up a

flying squad of legal execu-tives or clerks, driving com-pany BMWs with the registration plates LAW, to

provide round the clock legal

help to people accused of

serious crimes across England and Wales. While effective in capturing

much of the work provided by

those taken into custody ac-

cused of serious crime they

were not universally well re-ceived by other lawyers, the

legal establishment or indeed,

Regulator attacks **Railtrack** investment

Railtrack's record of invest ment in the railways was condemned as "wholly unacceptable" yesterday by the privatised industry's regulator.

John Swift said he would be demanding prompt action from the company to ensure an improvement in spending on maintaining and improving the network's track, signalling, tunnels and bridges. In a letter to the pressure group Save Our Railways. Mr Swift also said he would seek a detailed statement from Railtrack on its commitment to its infrastructure investment plan. Railtrack said it planned to invest £10 billion in the network over the next ten years but that it was taking time to build up to these "ambitious" levels.

Ulster braced for new IRA terror

Northern Ireland has been put on a full-scale terrorist alert after the Royal Ulster Constabulary warned that intelligence reports and weap-ons finds indicated the IRA was intent on launching a

new campaign.

Meanwhile John Hume, leader of the SDLP, urged John Major to take a "minor risk" for peace by clearing the way for Sinn Fein to enter allparty talks. He said he thought that a genuine ceasefire could be secured.

Maguire faces

Donna Maguire, the convicted IRA bomber, is facing a new trial over a broken ankle. Maguire, 30, was awarded £13,500 compensation after telling a judge that she in-jured her ankle when she tripped on a broken footpath near her home in Newry, Co Down. The Court of Appeal in Belfast yesterday ordered a retrial after being told no record could be found of a child Maguire had claimed to be visiting in hospital at the

Reynolds appeals on libel decision

The former Irish Prime Minister, Albert Reynolds, is to appeal against the London High Court finding that he had been libelled by *The* Sunday Times but eligible for

only Ip in damages.

Mr Reynolds, 64, said the summing-up by Mr Justice French at the end of the six week trial was "unbalanced and grossly unfair. He said the jury's decision about damages was adversely affected by it.

Princess's friend in robbery ordeal

A close friend of Princess Margaret, Countess of Snow-don, is recovering in hospital after being beaten and robbed at his home in west London. Ben Holland-Martin, 41, sustained a broken nose, ribs and cheek bone, multiple stab wounds and severe multiple bruising.

Two men pulled a gun on the financier as he parked his BMW. They tied him up and threatened to kill him before driving off in the car.

Fraud office investigates Tracie Andrews' solicitors

sented Miss Andrews at yes-

terday's hearing, claimed at

THE legal firm representing Tracie Andrews is currently under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office following allegations of systematic long-term abuse of the legal aid system.

Robinsons, the leading firm in the West Country, and one of the largest in Britain, has long courted controversy by breaking the time-honoured conventions of the legal establishment. Police raided the firm's offices in Bristol, Cheltenham, Gloucester and Swindon last year and also the home of some of the partners.

the time that the raids were a "fishing expedition" possibly prompted by a complaint from a former employee. The Serious Fraud Office said yesterday: "There is an ongoing investigation into alleged fraud on the Legal Aid Board." She was unable to say

when the inquiry would be Mr Robinson, described by colleagues as flamboyant and a larger than life character" is considered an impressive courtroom advocate and his cluding Tim Robinson.

Tim Robinson, who repre
a large amount of the legal aid

'Road rage' case

Continued from page 1 joke that she intended to play

on Mr Harvey as it was a garment normally worn by black people which he would

have hated.

Miss Moreton said two fragments of a "multifunctional" knife had been found. one beneath Mr Harvey's body and one nearby. Police have yet to find a murder weapon, but the prosecution claimed Miss Andrews had time to get rid of the knife. She had not been strip searched as she was not a suspect at the start. Bloodstains on Miss Andrews's clothes suggested she stabbed Mr Harvey, and on Monday.

other patches of blood disputed her version of where her fiance was murdered. Defence solicitor, Tim Rob-

inson, said: "When did you ever, ever hear a case ... where there is a such a dramatic lack of hard evi-dence?" He said his client stood by her description of the road rage killing that could have been racially motivated, as Mr Harvey is dark skinned and frequently mistaken as being Asian. Mr Robinson said he hoped

a judge at Birmingham Crown Court would hear Miss Andrews's application for bail

the police. Nor had the firms earlier method of providing a service always proved popular. In 1989 Avon and Somerset police

banned six of Mr Robinson's clerks from entering police stations to interview clients. Mr Robinson mounted a challenge in the High Court and succeeded in getting the ruling overturned. The firm was also reported

to the Solicitors' Complaints Bureau in the same year for entering a float in the Cheltenham carnival which depicted a

Millennium chief resigns



Hartop: disillusioned

Continued from page 1 ensure that the lottery is not extend the period by up to two years, a proposal that Labour has denounced as "madness". Ministers claim that plans for the exhibition are in

jeopardy because Labour has not backed proposals for the national lottery to take on any losses from the 2000 event. At present, £200 million is to be taken from the lottery. £150 million from private

companies and the remaining £350 million from other income including ticket sales. Labour figures are demand-

left with a huge commitment that will take money from other good causes.

Jack Cunningham, Shadow National Heritage Secretary, met Bob Ayling, chairman of Millennium Central, this week to thrash out details of of the funding proposals. Although the meeting was described as "constructive", Dr Cunningham is understood to retain deep reservations over the viability of the project. He said that Mr Hartop's decision "can hardly

project" and he said that the appointment of "yet another minister is hardly the credibility either."

Mr Harrop was brought in to be chief executive of the Millennium Central by Mr Heseltine. He was seconded from the Welsh Development Agency, where he had been brought in as a troubleshooter. In his three months, he drew up a business plan for the exhibition which costed it at £704 million. Colleagues suggest that he sees no role for himself now that it is to be run as a public company.



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attacks

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Mother freed after stiletto attack on husband's lover

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A MOTHER jailed for attacking her husband's mistress with a stiletto-heeled shoe spoke of her joy yesterday after being freed in time to spend Christmas with her family. Debbie Smith, who collapsed immediately after her nine-month jail sentence was quashed in the Court of Appeal, later thanked everyone who had supported her

"fight for justice". She said: "I am obviously delighted at the court's decision. But I have been through a terrible ordeal and now just want to be reunited with my children."

Mrs Smith, 29, was jailed last week after being convicted of attacking her best friend, whom she had discovered in a bedroom with her husband. She began sobbing heavily

yesterday and her legs gave way as Lord Justice Beldam substituted a one-year probation order for the prison term. Less than an hour later, Mrs Smith, of Dukinfield, Greater Manchester, looked more composed as she was hustled by minders from The Sun to a waiting Mercedes for a reunion with her children,

Emma, 11, Jeff, 9, and Jona-John Parsons, her solicitor,

absolutely delighted at what has happened and that the appeal has been allowed. The family is glad to be reunited

Mrs Smith's release came four days after she was led away from Manchester Crown Court in handcuffs for unlawful wounding and af-fray, screaming for her children. She was held in the hospital wing of Risley remand centre, near Warring-ton, because doctors were concerned at her emotional state. The trial judge, Judge Peter Lakin, had described her behaviour as unnecessary and unreasonable. She had surprised her husband, Jeffrey, 31, and her former best friend, Francine French, 30, in the bedroom of her brother-inlaw's home and, losing con-

In his judgment yesterday Lord Justice Beldam described Mrs Smith as a hard-working and good mother. He said she had been grossly provoked by a husband who had been carrying on a secret affair with the next-door neighbour. Mrs French was not badly injured in the assault, but Mrs Smith suffered a fractured wrist, said outside court: "We are strained neck and bruises on

trol, had lashed out with the

broken stiletto heel of her

Gladys Adshead, 59, Mrs Smith's mother, said afterwards: "It is the best Christmas present I could have wished. It is such a relief."

grandmother.

her body and face. Lord Jus-

tice Beldam criticised the trial

judge for taking too restrictive

a view of the offence and said he had been wrong to send her

He said that the judge could

not have taken account of the

damage such a sentence could

do to a caring mother and "the

effect it could have on the

family already severely dis-

tressed by the departure of the

father". He asked why, "in the circumstances", it had been necessary for Mrs Smith to

have been brought before a

court at all.

Earlier Nick Clarke, for

Mrs Smith, said that his client

has been totally traumatised by the jail sentence. Staff at

Risley had been concerned for

health and had taken turns to

care for her and console her.

He said her agony had been

heightened during her stay in hospital when she had learned

that her estranged husband

had taken her two boys away

from school against the wishes

of the headmaster. The child-

ren have since been reunited

with their maternal

have sold their story to The Sun for an undisclosed sum.

Lawyers for the family said that any deal was a private

The family is understood to

to prison.

Mr Smith's family reacted with anger last night at the court's decision. Michael Smith, his brother, said that no one knew the whole truth of what happened in the marriage. He described Mrs Smith as unstable, vengeful, and destructive.
He said: "We have lost all

faith in the justice system. She is the one who broke the law and she has made his life hell for years. All that Jeff has done is to build himself a new life after years of misery and



Debbie Smith clutching a photograph of her three children, shown below, as she



Lawyer's violence drove wife to run over child

By A STAFF REPORTER

A SOLICITOR'S wife drove her car over a girl aged six while escaping from her hushand, who had punched her after drinking heavily at a party.

Sonia Hall realised what she had done when she stopped the car to try to shake her husband off the bonnet, where he was hanging on by the windscreen wipers. She had been trying to drive across a field without her headlights on. The girl suffered a ruptured liver but has since recovered.

When Mrs Hall, of Bournemouth, appeared at Oxford Crown Court yesterday, the judge criticised her husband, Richard Hall for his "disgraceful" behaviour. He said he was largely to blame for the accident during a Round Table weekend party at Oxford Rugby Football Club.

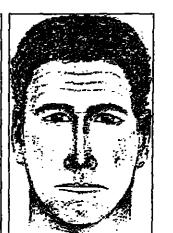
Mrs Hall admitted wilful neglect causing actual bodily harm. The prosecution dropped a charge of inflicting grievous bodily harm. She was given a conditional dis-

charge for 12 months. Mr Hall did not attend the hearing, where Judge Paul Clark told his wife: "This court sees all too much the evil effects on others of matrimo-nial discord. On the balance of evidence your husband behaved disgracefully when drunk and it was totally improper conduct for a solicitor of the Supreme Court.

"You are well aware of the awful thing you did, but the blame largely attaches to your husband who, it appears, is a man of drink and violence."

Mrs Hall told police she could not remember getting into the car or driving it after she was punched, adding: "I didn't intend to hurt my husband or anyone else." Stewart Patterson, for Mrs

Hall, said the couple had 2 background of rows and violence. "Her husband was very drunk and this is confirmed by police. His behaviour to them was quite obnoxious." The court was told that the girl's parents were consider-.



Computer likeness of

Police show face of man wanted over vicious rape

By Lin Jenkins

POLICE investigating the rape of a woman ignored by motorists as she struggled with her attacker yesterday issued a computerised image of a man they want to question.

Detectives in Kent issued the likeness of a man seen in Watts Lane, Chislehurst, where the 36-year-old senior civil servant was beaten in the face as she tried to fight him off, dragged through a thick gorse bush and raped.

Only one of 378 motorists stopped by police at the traffic bottleneck 24 hours after the attack said that they had driven the route the previous evening. The woman was attacked at about 7pm after walking from Chislehurst

Nobody said that they saw her struggling on the pavement with the rapist for up to five minutes as traffic queued at the mini-roundabout next to Chislehurst cricket ground. The woman said that she was so close to the passing traffic that she could distinguish the

faces of drivers. While disappointed with the results of the roadblock. detectives said they have had a good response from appeals to the public. The woman. who was told by her attacker that she would be stabbed to death if she tried to shout for help, was still being treated in hospital last night.

She has injuries to her face and inside her mouth. A metal object was pushed into her mouth and she was knocked ing a civil claim against Mr to the ground and repeatedly Hall, who was now likely to be kicked in the head and body.

Councillor lied for £9,000 in benefits

Jeffrey Smith and his mistress. Francine French

By A Staff Reporter

A LABOUR councillor who fraudulently claimed housing benefit from his own authority was discovered when he filled in a nomination form for a

local election.

Christopher Wright was not registered for council tax at the address he gave and council officers investigated. Yester-day Wright. 49. of Broadstairs, Kent, was jailed for six months. He admitted seven charges of deception and asked for 39 similar offences to be considered.

His wife Brenda, 52, admitted three similar charges at a previous hearing and asked for 26 more to be considered. The couple claimed a total of

Wright, a former publican and printer, twice stood un-successfully for Parliament. He was heavily defeated in the Thanet South seat in 1987 by Jonathan Aitken. After winning, the Tory MP said: "He was the Tories' secret weapon. He was loutish, boorish and

A Labour councillor, Derrick Mortlock, said of Wright "His activities give us great cause for regret. With the benefit of hindsight, it is unfortunate he was our parliamentary candidate.*

The Wrights, who were living together but not married when the deception started, claimed they were brother and sister. They saidthey had no income other than income support, and no property except their home. But shortly before Wright embarked on his frauds, the couple bought a five-storey property at Margate, divided into flats. It was rented out and brought them at least £15,000 a year. During the investigation Wright claimed it belonged to a coustil.

Judge David Croft, QC, told Wright: This was a persistent and carefully thought-out crime. You knew the system and you milked it for greed, not because you needed it."
Brenda Wright was given 18
months' probation and 100 hours' community service.

Burberrys brews legal storm over designer's 'ripped off' coat check

By GRACE BRADBERRY, STYLE EDITOR

BURBERRYS, the clothing company renowned for its raincoats, has taken legal action to prevent the British designer Paul Smith from using a beige and red check similar to the Burberry design

in his menswear line.

Executives decided to act after they saw a Paul Smith coat featured in the September issue of the magazine FHM. They contacted Smith, claiming that the check, first used by the company in the 1920s, was a recognisable

trade mark. When Smith refused to withdraw the offending coat, Burberrys sought an injunc-tion stopping Paul Smith Ltd from manufacturing and sell-ing coats in what it claims is the Burberry check. The battle will be hard fought, as both will be hard fought, as both companies enjoy considerable success in Japan, where traditional British designs are much sought after and where Smith is the biggest selling European designer.

Paul Smith Ltd has 184 stores worldwide, including eight in Britain, one in Paris.

eight in Britain, one in Paris, one in New York, and 162 in Japan, anda worldwide turnover of £142 million. Smith, 50, was unavailable for com-

ment yesterday.

He is known for a distinc-tively British style, but one which is modern rather than Saville Row inspired. By contrast, Burberrys is the quintessential traditional English label with two Royal War-rants. The Burberry even appears in the Oxford English Dictionary as a generic name for a good quality raincoat.
Founded by Thomas Burberry in 1856, the company, which has 55 stores world-wide, started out as a manu-facturer of weatherproof gabardine clothes. The first Burberry raincoat, known as the "slip-on", went on sale in the 1890's.

The check design originated in Edinburgh in 1924 and was first used as a lining along with many other pat-terns. It was not until the 1960s that the check emerged

as the most popular lining in which it was worn by John

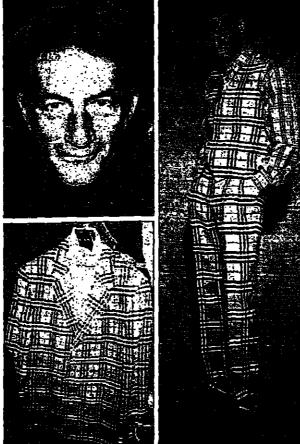
In 1968, the check was introduced into Japan on umbrellas, and raincoats soon followed. The Americans also took to the check, used primarily as a lining. By the late 1980s it was seen as epitomising the city slicker style — Michael Douglas were one in the film Wall

Marcello Mastroianni, who died this week, was the trench coar's best advertisement - he wore one throughout the sixties and seventies. Other film stars to sport the check included Ingrid Bergman and Grace Kelly, as well as Jacques Tati in Mon Oncle. It cropped up again this year in the film Mission: Impossible,

Over the years, men have evolved "right" and "wrong" ways to wear the Burberry raincoat. Buckling the belt is seen as wrong tying it as "right". A turned-up collar has been fashionable, off and on. Despite all this, the raincoat — the men's retails at £425 —

now accounts for only 10 per cent of Burberrys' sales. The check, however, is featured on over 300 products accounting for £500 million at wholesale The best-selling item is a cashmere muffler.

"People have been ripping off the check for 25 years," Stanley Peacock, managing director, said. "But usually



Burberrys says the coat designed by Paul Smith, above, is too like their own check design, right

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By JOHN YOUNG

AT THE age of 15 months,

Beth Nee is a picture of

health and happiness, ad-ored by the staff of the Evelina Children's Hospital

in southeast London and

enjoying the attentions of a

reporter and photographer

from The Times.
Yet it is something of a

miracle that she is alive, let

alone thriving. She was born

II weeks prematurely, her

twin brother died at birth and

Tiny rays of hope for premature babies

THE SUNDAY TIMES The real Evita's story

Juan Peron had a taste for child mistresses. Evita 24, she could still be



that their first night together was one of great passion. She was frigid, he was lethargic. They were like two children. His massive body, which initially reminded her of a bull, turned out on closer acquaintance to be more that of a calf.

Tomorrow read the story of the real Evita

fitted the pattern. Even at mistaken for a doll. But it would be wrong to assume

she was given less than a 50 per cent chance of survival. For the first three months she was on a ventilator until her lungs matured enough to support her tiny body. Her kidneys failed she needed dialysis for five weeks, had to be fed intravenously and then developed a serious blood

But after five months she was able to leave hospital, her kidneys are functioning normally and she has been back only for periodic check-ups. Her mother, Lorraine, from Orpington, Kent, also has kidney problems and has been told that she can have no more babies. "So you can see that Beth really is a very special package," she said.

infection.

While Beth appears to

al. for others the struggle is only just beginning. Each of the cots in the neo-natal ward at the Evelina - the paediatrie department of the Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust - contains a tiny body born before its time and

maturity. In one corner of the ward David and Gail Burrows, of Gravesend, Kent, are at the Hollie. She was born at just 23 weeks, an age at which, according to Dr Grenville Fox, a pacdiatric consultant,

bedside of their daughter. the great majority fail to

of brain damage caused by haemorrhages or lack of oxygen," he said. "The lungs are also frequently damaged and a significant proportion of children born so early will grow up handicapped. "If their condition deteriorates after birth, we have to

needing all the help of modern medicine to enable its question whether resuscitation is worthwhile, although of course we also take the parents' wishes into account. The Evelina Appeal In Hollie's case, she was looking good and we decided I enclose a cheque / postal order (payable to The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal) for E to put her straight on a

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In the first two weeks of her life, she has suffered a blood infection, a small brain haemorrhage and her heart is under strain from an unclosed valve, yet the prog-nosis is still reasonably opti-mistic. Mrs Burrows has had three previous miscarriages and her last child lived for just 20 minutes. "We're just glad every time we come here and find Hollie's still here," her husband said. Everyone has been magnificent."

Like all the London teaching hospitals, Guy's combines the functions of a centre of specialist expertise with those of a district general hospital. Of the 2,500 babies born each year in the Guy's district.



Beth Nee and her mother, Lorraine, at the Evelina Children's Hospital

tal care, but many others are brought in from further afield because of the quality of its post-natal care.

Dr Judy Rissik, associate paediatric specialist, says that all babies born more than three weeks early are defined as premature, but the biggest

difficulties come with those

born at 23 or 24 weeks. Apart from brain damage, they are likely to experience heart. lung, kidney or neurological diseases, and often a combination of more than one. "In most cases, these can be detected by pre-natal scan-ning," she said. "But some-times the problems develop

after birth. Sometimes an immediate operation is needed, but obviously the risks are that much greater, so we try to let them grow a bit." Many, like Beth Nee, have indeed grown more than a bit. Less than a generation ago they would have stood

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Woman's desperate hunt for egg donor

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN INFERTILE woman desperate to have a child has been told to find an egg donor within four months or lose her place as next in line for in vitro fertilisation.

The 32-year-old, who has waited five years to reach the top of the queue, yesterday appealed for someone to give her "the most precious of Christmas gifts". Doctors have told the woman that the NHS allocation of £2,000 will go to someone else if it is not taken up by April. The woman, who wishes to

remain anonymous, and her husband come from the North East. Both her ovaries were removed when she was 17 after cysts were discovered. She was also born without fallopian tubes. However IVF technology

can allow such women to have patients waiting."

become pregnant by using a donor egg fertilised in the laboratory by sperm from the patient's husband which is transplanted into the womb.

The woman has been accepted on the programme run by South Cleveland Hospital in Middlesbrough, which has treated 47 people this year. Her sister offered to donate an egg but at 36 she is one year too old to be accepted. The woman said: "My husband and I are both desperate

for a baby and it is hard to describe what that longing is like. It feels as if something is missing." Philip Taylor, the consultant gynaecologist in charge of the programme, said donors were hard to find. "We would welcome any women who feel able to donate eggs as we always

The Kev Koyston Such

faced possible dismissal.

Our report (December 10) 1994, and he divorced her on about the divorce and remar-the grounds of her admitted riage of the Rev. Royston Such. adultery. We also accent that Vicar of Ropley, Hampshire, suggested that he abandoned the relationship between Mr Such and Ms Riviere was his first wife for his curate, the Rev Tana Riviere, for which he always proper and was strictly professional until well after Mr Such's decree was abso-We are asked to make it lute. They married on August clear, and we accept, that Mr 31, 1995. We apologise for Such did not abandon his these mistakes and for any wife. She left him in October embarrassment caused.

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Wealth and beauty hid a history of childhood traumas

EMMA GIFFORD, who was put on probation yesterday for three years after admitting infanticide, was wealthy. charming and beautiful — attributes which appeared to guarantee a bright future.

Brought up on a family estate in the rolling country-side of Little Chart, near Ashford, Kent, she was 19 when her father, Michael, bought her a £250,000 flat in

South Kensington, London. Mr Gifford, 60, was for 12 years chief executive of the 13 billion Rank organisation until his retirement last year. His salary was about £400,000 a year, with share options worth an extra £428,000 in 1984

As a teenager, Emma attended the £7,500-a-year St Edmunds School in Canterbury, Kent, where she appeared happy and was popular with the other girls. She spoke often of her ambition to become an actress. She was considered bright, charming, confident and gregarious.

n' desperat

or egg donor

After leaving school, her springboard into a happy adult life seemed assured when she secured a place at Edinburgh University to study English and Drama.

Soon after she started her first term in 1993, she fell in love with Joseph Ernst, a Portugese architecture undergraduate, who also worked part time as a male model.

But despite this apparently



Miss Gifford: abused by her alcoholic mother

childhood, it has emerged, was turbulent and traumatic, neglectful mother and an absent, workaholic father.

Mr Gifford's job frequently took him abroad on business and he stayed in London during the week. Emma's mother was alcoholic and was said in court to have "persistently abused" her daughter, who developed an obedient

and pleasing personality.
Only six months after starting university, she took an overdose. With Mr Ernst's help she was encouraged to write to her father and seek help. She started to see a psychiatrist, but her problems had only just begun. In November, after abandoning university and moving to her London flat, she found out she was pregnant. She concealed the pregnancy and gave birth

she had had an abortion.

worked until about midnight at a florists shop. When she returning home she began to experience contractions, lay down in the bathroom and at

The baby appeared to be coughing and not very well. She took him into the living room and tried unsuccessfully to breastfeed him, before both fell asleep. She agonised over her future until 5pm the next day when she was expected to go into work.

"She felt as though she had no option. She didn't know what to do. So she placed a flannel which she had used to clean the child over his face and put a pair of her boyfriend's pyjama bottoms over his head. and covered his head with a pillow for a couple of minutes and then went away and was physically sick."

baby was adopted, but the protracted process was said to have further contributed to Miss Gifford's deteriorating mental health. In 1995, she discovered she

was pregnant again. Mr Ernst told her he wanted to end the relationship. He moved to Portugal and she pretended On April 5 last year she

about 3am gave birth to a son.

William Boyce, for the pros-ecution, told the Old Bailey:

Gifford then dressed and went to work. When she returned she removed the pillow. "She thought the infant was not alive but couldn't really bring herself to look at him," said Mr Boyce. In a state of despair Gifford rang her brother,





Top, Michael Gifford, a multimillionaire businessman; left, the family home: Miss Gifford's £250,000 flat

Kristopher, who came to collect her "and unknowingly the child because she had it with her" and drove her to the family home in Kent for the night. The next day she returned to the flat and placed

Doctors who interviewed her at the time said she appeared to have lost all touch with reality. Now 22, Miss Gifford continues to live in her flat and is receiving psychiatric

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acted with overwhelming sympathy and said it was not unusual for young women to feel vulnerable and isolated when pregnant. A spokeswoman for the Family Plan-ning Association said: "The case does emphasise the need

to make sure that young people know there are agencies designed to listen and provide support in this kind of situation. It is just tragic that she could turn to them for

QC faces jail after 'liquid lunch'

By TIM JONES

A BARRISTER who failed to give a second breath specimen after the first had indicated he was nearly four and a half times over the drink-drive

limit was warned yesterday that he could be imprisoned.
David Hands, QC, was stopped at 5pm by a plainclothes policewoman who had seen him drive down a oneway street near his home in Horseferry Road Magistrates'

Court was told.
When Rupert Mayo, for Hands, said his client had had lunch" on the day of his arrest. Alex Ormerod, the magistrate said: "He hadn't just had lunch, he had an enormous amount of alcohol, It was a forbidding liquid lunch. The amount here was absolutely enormous. The court must therefore consider a custodial sentence."

Jacqueline Kerr, for the prosecution, said that a roadside test on Hands, 53, had been inconclusive and he had managed at Kennington police station to produce only one specimen when two were

required.

Mr Mayo argued that the incriminating reading could not be used in evidence. But Mr Ormerod said: "The law says I can take into account any sample which is provided. You may say that he would have been better off if he hadn't provided a sample at all." Hands, he said, had admitted that the refusal was deliberate by pleading guilty to a charge of failing to provide a specimen.

Mr Mayo said his client's offence would be communicated to the Bar Council. The conviction will have disastrous consequences, professional and otherwise."

orange"

Ed butssison telecom

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One fifth of TV violence is on children's shows

By Alexandra Frean, media correspondent.

THE amount of violence in that violence can have harmchildren's television - programmes has risen by 3 per cent in the past year, despite repeated calls from the Government and regulators for it

to be reduced. Children's programmes accounted for 22 per cent of all violent acts on television in 1995-96, compared with 19 per cent in 1994-95, according to a survey carried out for all the main broadcasters and television watchdogs. When satellite cartoon channels are included, children's pro-grammes account for 34 per cent of all television violence.

Lady Howe of Aberavon, chairwoman of the Broadcasting Standards Council, said she was particularly troubled about the increase in violence in children's programmes largely as a result of the trend to fill up the schedules with animation. "As we have pointed out, animation represents a real danger to the range and quality of children's programming, as well as through

violent content," she said. Lady Howe said that the survey, conducted by Profes-sor Barrie Gunter of Sheffield University, raised the question of whether television was doing enough to promote posi-tive role models. Are there enough examples of negotiation to resolve disputes, as opposed to verbal and physical aggression?"

The survey, which monitored the content of programmes on ten television channels over 28 selected days, showed that nearly two thirds of all cartoons contained viclence. One aspect likely to worry regulators and viewers is the apparent failure to show

ful effects. In half the incidents of violence monitored in chil-

dren's programmes, no physi-

cal injury resulted.

A spokesman for the Independent Television Commission, which co-commissioned the report, said that more research was needed into the effects of animated programmes. "To a certain extent there seems to be a Tom and Jerry' factor - these programmes have been the staple of children's television for many years. But as the amount of cartoon material on television increases, we will have to look very carefully at

it," he said. The study also showed that the main source of violence on television was cinema films, which accounted for 54 per cent of all violent acts, compared with 53 per cent a year

Overall, however, violence accounted for only 1.39 per cent of total broadcast hours.



Tom and Jerry: unknown effect of animation

Gentleman loses fight

who fell for the English gentle man of her dreams was granted a divorce yesterday by a judge who conceded that her husband had become a domi-

ed by Simon Paul, a Londoner, and married him in Las Vegas in 1990. However, he became a "shiftless, dishonest" brute, her counsel said. forcing her to have their second child adopted against her will and making her sever ties with her family in the United States.

High Court Family Division, granted Ms Cannon, 26, a divorce yesterday against the wishes of her husband, "Al-though I did not find him disagreeable, I was driven to say there was considerable force in the other particulars of counsel's description," the

judge said. Mr Paul, 30, also indulged in what the judge described as "dishonest and fraudulent activity" during the marriage. "Without hesitation I conclude that the husband has behaved in such a way the wife cannot reasonably be expected to live.

Earlier this year, the judge said he had ruled at the High Court that the child should be with her mother.

turned bully to keep wife

By LIN JENKINS

AN AMERICAN teenager neering bully. Dana Cannon was captivat-

Mr Justice Wilson, in the

with him." However, he said that Mr

Paul had contested divorce proceedings, hoping to force her to return from America. where she had fled after being granted custody of their firstborn daughter, Eden, now nearly three. He believed that, if he could make them return, he could prove to his wife that their marriage could be saved.

'Socialist' address thrown out

By JOHN SHAW

A BUSINESS consultant won a legal battle yesterday to stop a local authority naming his street after a dead Labour councillor.

Ray Knightly said he had been horrified when he discovered that the development of four and five bedroom houses was to be named Brian Barnard Close, He said the address in Beetley Norfolk, (pop 1,200), sounded like

an old people's home.

Mr Knightly and John Hilditch, developer of the culde-sac, wanted to retain the unofficial name of Elmham Court. Mr Hilditch's development company claimed the formal name was against the

wishes of residents and said that Mr Barnard, a railwayman and active socialist who died in 1988, was known for "extreme partisan views".

Robert Stevens, a solicitor for the company at a hearing at Swaffham Magistrates' Court, said the name conveyed the wrong image for "quality executive homes". He described it as "rather like buying what you thought was a Mercedes only to find out it was a Skoda".

Leslie Perrett, a member of the parish council which unanimously chose the name, said that Mr Barnard had been 'a prime mover in establishing the village play-ing field, the village hall and was very active in the

community". His political views were not relevant to village matters.

Michael Horn, for Breckland District Council, said: "It is pure snobbery to say it is unsuited to a private development but is all right for council houses." A compromise will now be sought.

The London School of Economics was inadvertently omitted from yesterday's table of university research ratings. The LSE came third, with the number of staff assessed 366. the percentage entered 98, and the average rating 6.27.



minimum of 12 months.

BUPA accused of discriminating against elderly

IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

BUPA has clashed with Irish legislators over its health premiums amid accusations that it is discriminating against the elderly and forcing American-style health insurance on Ireland.

The British-owned health insurance company moved into the Irish market last month. It set up in opposition to the government-controlled Voluntary Health Insur-

company offering private health insurance. But it has rum into difficulty already. The Attorney-General, Dermot Gleeson, has raised questions about BUPA's premiums. According to RTE radio. Mr Gleeson is concerned that BUPA is discriminating against the elderly in favour of the

young and healthy. Under Irish legislation, private health insurers are banned from charging older people more for

their insurance. The 1994 Health Insurance Act says all insurers must abide by "community rating" only 9 per cent of the 1.4 million people currently insured by the VHI opt for the basic plan. Most must abide by "community rating" and charge a healthy 25-year-old the same as a frail 85-year-old.

BUPA Ireland introduced a scheme in keeping with community rating. It is a cheaper equivalent of the basic VHI plan. Under the BUPA scheme, a young family of two adults and two children pays an annual premium of £455.74 before tax relief, £36.10 cheaper than the VHI equivalent. However,

choose more expensive insurance.

Under the BUPA scheme, more expensive insurance requires buying into the company's Cash Plan. This system charges older people substantially more than younger people. The BUPA Gold Plan, the most comprehensive scheme, costs £177.73 for a person aged under 18, rising to £705.60 for someone aged 55 and older. The VHI is accusing ing system. The non-profitmaking company claims that the arrival of BUPA is the first step to Americanstyle health insurance, which bases premiums on a person's age. The VHL now almost 40 years old. says its insurance scheme will

younger members. A spokeswoman for BUPA Ireland said that its products were designed for the Irish market. She

collapse without the support of

BUPA of driving "a coach and said the company was confident four" through the community ratthat it would not be found in breach of any legislation. It had submitted its plans to the Department of Health for examination.

BUPA is facing tough opposition as the VHI is an arm of the Department of Health. The sole shareholder is the Health Ministry. which also appoints the board. In May, Brian O'Shea, the junior Health Minister, said that the Government would change the legislation if community rating was

has served the Irish people too well over a long time to allow any interference with it to be tolerated." he said.

A BUPA spokesman in London said the company was waiting to see the outcome of deliberations by the Department of Health. We have to take one step at a time. We have not yet been outlawed. We did understand that there would be questions raised. But we are surprised at the reaction."

All a little girl wanted from Santa in 1911

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

chocolates and a rattle for her

The letter came to light

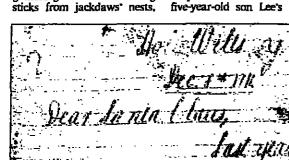
when Peter Hulbert cleaned

out the chimney and cast-iron

new baby sister.

singed by a hot cinder in one A LETTER that Santa Claus never received has fluttered place but otherwise intact. down the chimney of a country Apart from asking Santa to "remember the very poor children in the slums", she cottage 85 years after it was "posted" there by nine-year-old Mabel Higgs. On December 8, 1911, she asked for a story book, a postcard album, a box of

pushed her beautifully composed request on four pages of an exercise book up the flue in her bedroom. There it remained hidden among the gathering dust and falling



Mabel Higgs's letter, found 85 years after "posting"

Post Office elves keep children's hopes alive

replied to 750,000 children who wrote to Santa Claus this year at his grotto in Reindeer Land (Michael Horsnell

writes).
Children have been send-ing him their Christmas lists, usually via the chimney or mantlepiece, since the early part of last century. But only since 1963 has the Post Office helping

Staff in Belfast deal with

the replies, warning children to be askeep when Santa calls. The last posting date for

Ÿesterday a spokesman said that children were no more demanding now than in years past. In this month's postbag was a letter from a girl whose bicycle had been stolen. She wanted it back and a new one for the thief. Another girl sent her father's CV and asked Santa to give

during renovations at Bramble Cottage in Holt. Wiltshire. In copperplate writing, Ma-

Dear Santa Claus Last year you brought me many nice presents and I think you were very kind indeed. I expect you would like to know what I should like you to bring me this year. Well, I should like you to bring me a storybook, a postcard album, a box of chocolates and a

We have a little baby and we would like you to bring her a rattle that will blow.

I hope you will remember the very poor children in the slums and in the large towns. I might stay awake for some time to see you come in our bedroom to put the things in my stocking the night you come. Our house is on the

With much love, I remain your little friend, Mabel.

Lee Hulbert, who wants Lego and Connect from Father Christmas, said: "I think Mabel's letter is good. It taught me more about Christmas and I wrote to Santa because of it. Christmas is good because Jesus was born then and I get a few of the chocolates on the Christmas tree."

Mabel Higgs was born in 1902 and died in 1979. Her father was an engine driver and her mother a housewife. Her only child, Wendy Hatter, 54, said last night: "I was very touched to hear about this letter. My mother was a lovely person. This letter seems very in keeping with what she was ike as an adult.

"It's furny to see how things change. Youngsters seem to want a lot more these days."

Tamarin bounces back from the brink

BY NICK NUITALL ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

CONSERVATIONISTS are winning the battle to save the golden lion tamarin. Eight hundred of the rare, squirrelsized monkeys are now alive

Twelve years ago, the golden lion tamarin was thought to be heading for extinction. But captive breeding pro-grammes at centres such as London Zoo, together with tic forests of Brazil, have managed to turn the tide. Garo Batmanian, director of the World Wide Fund for Nature office in Brazil, said yesterday that the monkeys, which sport a reddish-gold coat, were the wildlife success story of 1996.

He added: "Now we have a new challenge, to double the size of the tamarin's habitat over the next 30 years in order to ensure the long-term viability of this species in the

The international effort to save Leontopithecus rosalia follows the steady destruction of its forest habitat, which once covered a million square kilometers.

It is down to less than 2 per cent of its original size and what is left is highly fragmented: the tamarin's main reserve, Poco das Antas Biological, is only a few miles north of Rio de Janeiro. The area remains under threat of dearance for agriculture and

The species, which eats fruit and insects, has been saved by an international



The golden lion tamarin was badly affected by the destruction of its forest habitat

collaboration headed by the National Zoo in Washington DC and centres in Brazil and Europe. Jo Gipps, director of London Zoo, said that they had been breeding tamarins in captivity as part of a conservation project for more than ten years.

Those reintroduced in Brazil are genetically screened by the Washington team from zoo stocks around the globe. A key to the success has been

their acclimatisation in Brazilian-type conditions in Washington. Dr Gipps said the captively bred tamarins were now being reintroduced into wild groups. "The best way to learn what a dangerous snake is, what is good to cat and what is not, is from another, wild, golden lion

Mr Batmanian said scientists put at 2,000 the number of wild golden lion tamarins

needed to sustain the species' survival into the 21st century. Jose Luis Camargo, an ecologist at the main reserve, said yesterday: "We have isolated forest patches here and we are planning to build vegetation corridors so that the monkeys can move about and find suitable mates". The researchers plan to double the areas of protected forest by working in co-operation

play Baboushka. Josie, who was left for dead after the attack as she walked home could mouth the words and it was

pleased by that."

with local farmers.

Recovering Josie joins carol concert

with her mother and sister five months

ago, has had intensive therapy to restore

Yesterday she played the part of a

peasant in the school production put on

for parents in parish church. Shaun Russell, 45, who is returning to Wales where he and his wife Lin, 45, brought up

Ladybird becomes contract killer

BY NICK NUTTALL

LADYBIRDS could soon be enlisted by farmers and gardeners in their fight against aphids. Scientists have discovered a way of using them to spread a fungus that is harm-less to the ladybirds but deadly to the aphids.

Aphids such as greenfly and blackfly bring misery to rose cultivators and cost farmers millions of pounds each year. Researchers plan to coat large numbers of ladybirds with the fungal spores and dispatch them into fields and gardens at critical times of the year,

such as spring. Researchers are also isolating pheromones produced by ladybirds to attract mates. It is hoped to use them, perhaps as sprays, to attract spore-carrying ladybirds more efficiently to all parts of a field.

Helen Roy, one of the scientists behind the research, said that gardeners may soon be buying dead freeze-dried aphids laden with fungal spores and a tub of live ladybirds from their garden centres. "All you would do is moisten the aphid to release the spores and pop in the ladybirds, who then pick them up before releasing them into the garden," she said.

The discoveries have been made by scientists at Nottingham University and Rothamsted, the government-funded research station at Harp-enden, Hertfordshire. Ms Roy, of Rothamsted, said that the fungus Erynia neoaphidis stuck to the skins of aphids, using mucus, then burrowed into them, killing them within four days.

fantastic. I had wondered why the hymn

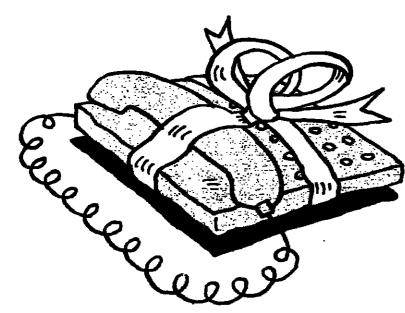
sheets for Baboushka were lying in the

lounge at home. I was surprised and

☐ Kent police were still interviewing Robert Friar, 35. an unemployed local

man. last night about the murders of Mrs

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rd to row bill at the Mercury National Weekend Rate. All calls include a 3.5p connection charge. For a quarterly fee you can add SmartCall (£5.75) or UK-Call (£3.75) to

half feasted

JOSIE RUSSELL, the girl who survived

the brutal attack that killed her mother and sister, celebrated Christmas and her

own painstaking recovery by joining a

She and her classmates from the small village school in Goodnestone, Kent, sang carols and performed the Russian nativity

school carol concert yesterday.

New TES editor is appointed

THE next editor of The Times Educational Supplement was named yesterday as Caroline St John-Brooks. She will re-place Patricia Rowan, who retires in April. Dr St John-Brooks edited

the education forum in The Sunday Times before becoming assistant editor of The Times Educational Supplement (TES) in 1990. She left in 1994 to become administrator for educational research and innovation at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in

Sir Edward Pickering. chairman of Times Supplements, said: "We had an impressive shortlist, but with her previous TES experience and recent three years studying education practice and policy around the world, Caroline St John-Brooks led the

Mrs Rowan, a former member of the Sunday Times Insight team, joined the TES as a sub-editor in 1972 and became editor in September 1989. Average weekly sales were 128,400 last year.

England at war: how the other

CHRISTMAS 1643, and the Civil War was at its height. The Earl and Countess of Bath, however, decided that they would drink and make merry during the festive sea-

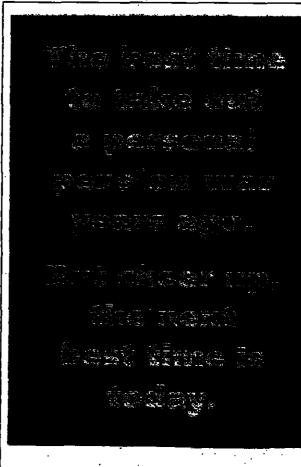
Henry, the 5th earl, and his wife, Rachel, were able to impress their guests with exotic food and spices from distant lands. To ensure the feasts at Tawstock House, near Barnstaple in Devon, were convivial, they stocked their cellars with more than 200 gallons of wine and beer.

The details of 17th-century life in one of the country's grand houses have been unearthed by Dr Todd Gray, a history lecturer at the University of Exeter.

Most of the staples — haunches of beef, mutton, venison and game - would have been available locally, he said. But the dried fruit and spices would have been obtained from the port of Bristol. They included currants at £3 9s 9d; 6lbs of almonds at 12s; 1fb of mace at 16st and ginger at 2s 6d.

The cooks would have prepared pastry dishes in advance, including blackbird, guinea fowl, turkey and hare pies. The household also ate huge amounts of oysters.

Dr Gray discovered the accounts, thought to have been lost when the house burnt down in 1787, in the archives of Kent County Council. They showed that the earl and countess spent more



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Women's knife attacker is suspect in murder case

A MILKMAN given three life sentences yesterday for knife attacks on two women is to be questioned by detectives about the unsolved murder of a teenage schoolgiri.

Colin Ash-Smith, 28, abducted his first victim from outside her home, stabbed her in the neck and back and tried to rape and strangle her. Three years later he forced another woman into a factory yard, slashed her throat and stabbed her 16 times.

contract.

arol concert

He was sentenced at the Old Bailey after admitting attempted murder, kidnapping,

attempted rape and causing grievous bodily harm.

He will be questioned about the murder of Claire Tiltman. 15, who was stabbed to death in January 1993 in a dark alley at Greenhithe, Kent, 200 yards from where Ash-Smith attacked one of the women. Detective Superintendent Nick Biddiss, who is leading the murder inquiry, said outside court yesterday: "We want to talk to him again about her murder. He is central to our inquiries."

Ash-Smith was at Claire's party three days before she was killed. He attended her funeral with his mother, a close family friend. Diane Ash-Smith resigned as Mayor of Swanscombe and Greencharged in October 1995. Claire's mother, Lin, is con-



Murder suspect Colin Ash-Smith and Claire Tiltman

vinced that Ash-Smith is the murderer. "At least now he will not be able to hurt anyone else," she said vesterday

In court Ash-Smith was described as a dangerous fantasist who worshipped the comic-strip hero Superman. The rented bedroom he shared with his girlfriend was stacked with pornography, war game magazines and more than 350 science fiction videotapes. When he carried out his attacks he wore a Superman T-shirt.

Five days before Christmas in 1988 he grabbed a 27-year-old cleaner outside her home and dragged her for a mile and half to waste ground in Swanscombe. He told her: "I have a gun and a knife. Don't scream or I'll kill you."

the drugs on his behalf.

was the result of wilful

The head of security at the

club has given evidence that

he knew only too well of the

problem. The appointment of

a man with such a bad

criminal record only serves to demonstrate how little effort

was made to stop the supply of

drugs in these premises.
"I make no findings against

any individual. But collective-

ly the management has a far

greater responsibility for these

tragic events than any of you

young people."
Miss Betts slipped into a

coma at her home in Latching-

never emerged. Her life-sup-

The judge added: "Some of

those young people who take Ecstasy fool themselves into

believing that there is no risk

that it will harm them. The

truth is unfortunately that, if

the drug is taken, there is a

Drug-dealing was a "cal-lous" trade and should always

merit as lengthy a jail sentence as possible, he said, but he accepted that Smith had not

bought the drugs for financial

Miss Betts's father, Paul, 50,

later praised the judge and said: "I am not after blood. I

just wanted to find out the

whole story. I think the judge has acted with great fortitude

and foresight. He has been able to gauge the part Smith has played."

possibility that it will kill."

five days later.

with the four-inch knife and repeatedly plunged it into the ground next to her face while he tried to rape her. He also forced her to pose for indecent photographs.
Robert Fischel, for the pros

ecution, said that Ash-Smith boasted to his victim that he had raped and murdered a number of women in London. But he only did it once a year and hated the sight of blood". He then stabbed her in the neck and tried to strangle her with a school tie, which snapped as she lost consciousness. Ash-Smith left her for dead after stabbing her five times in the back.

When police asked him if he had meant to kill her, he replied: "Well, I suppose so." In October 1991 he abducted Charlotte Barnard, a care

Greenhithe. He cut her across the throat with a flick knife then forced her into a factory yard, where he stabbed her 16 imes in the back and hands as she fought to protect herself.

Miss Barnard, who has since moved abroad, collapsed and held her breath to convince him that she was dead After walking away he took his girlfriend for a night out. When police arrested him

they found notes of four assault plans. In a diary he had written an account of the first attack, which he described as his "masterpiece". The court was told that psychiatrists at Broadmoor considered that his schizoid personality condition was untreatable.

Passing sentence, Mr Jus-tice Wright said that Ash-Smith should not be eligible for parole for at least 15 years. He told him: "From your late adolescence you have been driven by abnormal urges of a violent and sexual nature and those urges have for many years led you to fantasise about aggressive and sadistic

"It is eminently plain you are an appallingly dangerous man ... You have no real understanding or remorse for your behaviour.

You are far too dangerous to be at large. Whether you will ever cease to be a danger must be a matter of considerable doubt."



Lucia Crichton-Miller, centre, at the funeral of her father, Sir Laurens van der Post, in Chelsea yesterday

Prince pays last respects to mentor

mourners at the funeral of his friend and mentor, Sir Lavrens van der Post, vesterdav. The Prince comforted family members at the service at Christ Church, Chelsea, for the South African-born writer and explorer who was his "spiritual guru" and godfa-

ther to Prince William. The handwritten card on the Prince's wreath read: "For Dear Laurens. With everlasting gratitude and affection -always. Charles." Sir Laurens died peacefully, aged 90, at his home in London in the

early hours of Monday morn-ing, after his heart failed. The Prince had visited him three hours before his death and had planned a ninetieth birthday party for him at Highgrove, his country home in Gloucestershire. last

Friday.
The Prince entered the church with Sir Laurens's daughter, Lucia Crichton-Miller. Ten minutes later, after a choral prelude, pallbearers brought in the coffin covered with roses. Mrs Crichton-Miller led the mourners, followed by Sir

Lawrence Hughes, his American publisher, gave the address, calling Sir Laurens "one of the most remarkable human beings of our centuconducted by the Rev Thomas Hiney, a chaplain at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. He described Sir Laurens as a visionary, poet, soldier, sage,

land and the human spirit. cremation service was held after the service at Putney Vale, southwest

an inspiration and explorer of



The Prince: comforted his friend's close family

Supplier of Leah Betts drug told to warn friends

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

A STUDENT who admitted helping to supply Leah Betts with the Ecstasy tablet that killed her was told to warn his friends about the drug's dangers when he was given a two-

Mr Justice Kay told Stephen Smith, 19, of Basildon, Essex There is something you can do within the community to help - that is to go back among your student friends and to spread the message among them as to just how dangerous Ecstasy is."

Smith's former best friend, Steven Packman, 18, from Laindon, Essex, was told that he would face a retrial over his alleged part in supplying the tablet which Miss Betts took at her eighteenth birthday party in November 1995. The jury had been discharged after it failed to reach a verdict.

Sarah Cargill and Smith's girlfriend, Louise Yexley, both 8, received police cautions after admitting their part in the chain of friends which supplied Miss Betts.

The judge criticised the management of Raquel's, the nightclub in Basildon where four tablets were bought for Miss Betts and Miss Cargill. Smith, the court was told, said



Leah Betts: died after taking Ecstasy at party

guilty of Mills attack

a youth had approached a dealer at the club and bought The judge said: "I am satisfied that Raquel's nightclub was known among the young as a regular source of drugs. I have heard evidence from the then manager that he was not aware of this. If that is

Professor killed

Professor Keith Ruddock, 57, the estranged husband of Joan Ruddock, the Labour MP, died after being struck by a car in south London. He was Professor of Biophysics at Imperial College, London.

Budgen fined

A supermarket has been fined

don, Essex, from which she Bail refused

Roisin McAliskey, 25, the pregnant daughter of Berna-dette McAliskey, is to spend Christmas in prison after bail was again refused. She faces charges over a British bar-

Ministers have imposed an immediate ban on the sale of aerial shells and maroons, the type of mortar-launched firework responsible for the death of two people at bonfire parties last month.

ball stadium disaster.

Youth found

A member of a teenage gang was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm to John Mills, 58, husband of Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions. The 17-year-old, who cannot be named, was also found guilty of robbery by Knightsbridge Crown Court. He was remanded into custody for a pre-sentence

£23,000 after a woman died after being knocked over by a faulty automatic door. Phyllis Johnson, 79, hit her head as she fell at the Budgen store in Fakenham, Norfolk.

port system was switched off

racks bombing in Germany.

Firework ban

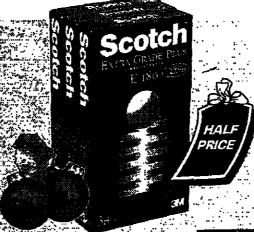
Damages appeal

South Yorkshire Police are to appeal against a £201,000 High Court damages award to John McCarthy, 35, of Liverpool, whose half-brother died in the Hillsborough foot-



recording time. Total Separate Selling Price £15. In-store





VIDEO TAPE 3-PACK Total Separate Selling

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BBC **VIDEO TAPE 5-PACK** 15 hours recording time. Total Separate Selling Price £18.45. MGM **VIDEO TAPE 4-PACK** 16 hours recording time. Total Separate Selling Price £20.

JVC VIDEO TAPE 6-PACK 18 hours recording time. Total Separate Selling Price £24.

MATSUI

VIDEO TAPE 9-PACK 27 hours recording time. Total Separate Selling Price £28

MALSUI

Scotch

Scotch VIDEO TAPE 5-PACK 20 hours recording time.

Total Separate Selling Price £30.

Scotch VIDEO TAPE 9-PACK

27 hours recording time. Total Separate Selfing



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Patient saved by phone call

SURGEONS saved the life of a patient after receiving instructions on how to carry out an operation in a telephone call to heart specialists. Doctors on the Isle of Wight had no time to transfer the 60-

year-old victim of a stabbing

accident to the mainland and

were forced to call Southamp-ton for help. Brian Smith, who had fallen on a knife while walking upstairs peeling an apple, was rushed to St Mary's Hospital in Newport with internal bleeding.

Peter Donaldson, one of the surgeons, said: "It was an

t makes both giver and receiver

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the patient to Southampton would have meant a delay of 90 minutes and in this case it could have been crucial. We did not know what extra damage would be caused by airlifting him and the ferry would have taken too long." Mr Smith had a small hole

in the front of his heart caused by the blade of the knife. We telephoned Southampton where this type of operation would not have posed any problem," Mr Donaldson said. "The doctors gave me some general advice about what to expect and the problems we could face." Mr Smith was given 16

pints of blood during the operation. "It was a fairly simple procedure in the end -I put my finger in the hole and my colleague stitched it up," Mr Donaldson said.



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God's judgment tries to rekindle hope from remnants of failure



The writer is Vicar of the University Church of St Mary's, Oxford

n the days before Christ-mas the Church thinks about judgment. This is because Christians wish to be ready and worthy to greet their King when he comes at Christmas, and it also links up with the expectation that Christ will come again, at the end of time, to judge the living and the dead. Thus, in the domestic excitement of Christ's birth, we see the

ultimate purpose of God. On the surface, judgment is portrayed as something imposed from outside by a God Who sits in a heavenly court.

pespective, judgment has to start from within a person, with a bit of honesty about one's own limitations and the readiness to see the good in other people. I once had the privilege of visiting Mother Teresa at work in Calcutta and I felt humbled by the commitment and self-sacrifice of her team of workers in trying to bring some dignity to the extreme poor of the city.

I was forced to face the question of whether I could have done this work myself and found myself overawed and daunted. Sometimes we However, from the spiritual feel judged by other people's



The Rev Brian Mountford

goodness — an act of generosity, self-giving, or courage in adversity — and ask, Why am I not like this? This is awe, and awe is a state of selfknowledge, when a person sees him or herself in the light of a greater perspective, and is challenged by it.

The experience of awe, which seems a rather neglect-

life, is to do with fear and admiration. In the Christmas stories, the shepherds were filled with fear when the angel told them of the birth of Jesus and, when the Wise Men arrived to see the infant Christ, they fell down and worshippped him. Why were they overawed? Because they had come face to face with God, and they felt judged by

There is some mysterious ingredient in this timeless story that, in the clamour of the modern world, still has the power to awaken in a person the seriousness of the challenge that love, goodness, truth and beauty makes on human life.

The obverse side of judgment, which is rightly and often emphasised pastorally. is the need for affirmation no one should feel guilty, put down, diminished, undervalued, inadequate. The uncoordinated child may feel

standard of First XI football-ers, but his ability must be affirmed and he must be helped to fulfil his potential, however limited. The same applies to relationships and to morality: we need affirmation and encouragement in order not to mess up our

relationships. Not all will be saints, but all should strive to be the best they can. And God's underlying affirmation of all people is symbolised at Christmas by the fact that he comes in humility, as an outsider, and temporarily homeless. This means that God's judgment

concerned with sorting sheep from goats, and seeing justice done, but about the building and rebuilding of lives, trying to rekindle hope from the shattered fragments of failure. This is perhaps the awesome perspective of Christmas: that it offers a fresh start with a child who shines as a light in the world, offering hope that is not sentimental because it stems from the eternal justice and

At Your Service,

Wealthy Catholics are putting Eton before Ampleforth

By RUTH GLEDHILL RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

tory, and believe that the way

LEADING Roman Catholic independent schools are calling for greater support from parents and bishops as increasing numbers of wealthy Catholics send their children to other public schools.

Although demand for a Catholic education in the grant-maintained and state sector has never been higher, public schools such as Ampleforth and Downside are concerned that Catholic families are passing them over in favour of a more secular or Anglican education at leading non-Catholic schools.

Two Catholic independent schools, Buckfast Abbey preparatory school in Devon and Belmont Abbey, near Hereford, have already closed, and at Downside, near Bath, numbers have fallen by a third in 20 years.

Eton, which appointed a Catholic chaplain in the early 1980s, now has about 300 Catholic boys, compared with just a handful 20 years ago. Marlborough and Epsom have followed Eton's lead in appointing Catholic chaplains, tapping a hitherto inaccessible source of pupils.

Father Antony Sutch, Head Master of Downside which Chamberlain: he urges charges £3,800 a term, saidthat Catholic parents were keen to be accepted by the Establishment. There is the idea that we can now get into Eton and hang on to our souls at the same time," he said. But he was also being "bombard-ed" by non-Catholics desperate to send their children to a Catholic school because of its

moral ethos. Father Sutch criticised the "league-table mentality" among some parents. "People don't seem to believe that a fully Catholic education is of as much value as league-table results," he said. "Schools are

being judged by league tables rather than by ethos."
Laity and clergy are alarmed by the trend. They want to arrest the large decline in Mass attendance, highlighted in the 1997 Catholic Direc-

to do this is through the Catholic education system. Father Leo Chamberlain, Head Master of Ampleforth College, the Benedictine public school in North Yorkshire, has criticised bishops for saying "all too little" about the importance of Catholic



schools. Yesterday he said: "There has been a trend for some secular schools, particularly in the private sector, to offer particular arrangements for Catholics. But a school with a Catholic chaplaincy is not the same as a Catholic school. And the opportunity to go to Sunday Mass is not the same as an education immersed in the culture, spiritual values and moral codes of the Church.'

While more wealthy Catholics are choosing a non-Catholic education for their children in the independent sector, some of the most loyal parents at Ampleforth, where fees are £12,555 a year, are Anglican. More than one in ten of its 644 pupils are non-Catholic, and e number is growing.

The religious education debate has taken on an added urgency in recent weeks in the light of the moral campaign launched by Frances Law-rence, widow of the murdered headmaster Philip Lawrence. In a recent address to the Catholic grant-maintained schools conference, Father Chamberlain said that it was part of the responsibility of Catholic schools to ensure that the results of Mrs Lawrence's campaign were lasting.

The steeply rising rates of divorce, the abandonment of marriage, the campaign for an active homosexual lifestyle to be regarded as of equal legitimacy to heterosexual, the dis-covery of serious moral failures within the Church all this contributes now to a sense of crisis in which we fully participate," he said.

He gave warning of a danger that Catholics would lose their way because of the new openness. "Schools are rightly perceived as standing at the centre of national concerns because it is there, after the family, that the shaping of personal futures lies," he said. Catholics want their own schools so that our vision of man as made in God's image may be passed to another

He said that parents' wishes had to be respected, but referred to the Church's policy that Catholic children in non-Catholic schools should still be given a proper Christian education. "It is difficult to conceive how this can be done as well in the circumstances of a secular school."



The Rev Ermal Kirby is the first black Methodist to be appointed a district chairman, the equivalent of a bishop. Mr Kirby, 45, who was born in Antigua, is to head the London North East District, which extends from the capital to Cambridgeshire and the Essex coast. He is currently a tutor in ethics at Queen's College, Birmingham

Hume calls for hope in the face of pessimism

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

CARDINAL Basil Hume. Archbishop of Westminster, yesterday urged Christians to shake off the prophets of doom. In a series of Christmas messages to the 4.4 million Roman Catholics in England and Wales, he said that, despite widespread unease in soci-

ety, there were signs of hope. He said in the Catholic Herald: "It is fashionable at the moment to be gloomy. There is widespread anxiety about economic stability, unemployment, the future of Europe, the quality of education, health and family life. No aspect of life, the Church included, escapes the pessimist's pen.'

And in The Tablet he suggested that unease had been fuelled "most powerfully, perhaps, by the appalling tragedy of Dunblane". But he said that this sentiment could, paradoxically, be seen as a sign of hope and of health.



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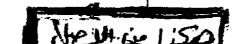
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Eritrea labours to put historic railway back on the tracks

PEASANTS and former guerrillas have scoured the barren hills of Eritrea, collecting the old rails and sleepers from improvised defensive trenches. Rusting steam trains have been brought out of old sheds, burnished, oiled and lovingly They chose the latter. restored. Retired railwaymen have been mobilised. Next month President Afewerki of Eritrea will formally inaugurate the restoration of one of

row-guage railways.

In Mussolini's day, when the Italians ruled Eritrea, steam trains used to puff up the line from the Red Sea port of Massawa through Asmara, the capital, to the Sudanese border. During the 30-year civil war between Ethiopia, which annexed the former colony in 1952, and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, both sides ripped up the rails and steel sleepers to reinforce their dug-outs and positions. The railway, a marvel of

Africa's most spectacular nar-

engineering, lay in ruins. When Eritrea achieved independence three years ago, an international consortium told the Government that it would cost £250 million to restore the line. There were two options: sell the remaining track and rusting locomotives to the Saudis for scrap: or restore the line themselves.

In August 1995, hundreds were employed to re-lay the sleepers and haul the rails back to the old trackbed.



drove and maintained the Italian engines, built in the 1920s and 1930s, were set to work to forge new parts and instruct younger drivers how to operate the old steam engines. Two newer diesel locomotives that have been sitting idle in Asmara were also stripped down and reassem-

Wizened old men who once

are already in operation, and the entire 75-mile section, linking Asmara and Mussawa, is virtually repaired. The project has cost around £3 million. Built in the 1890s, the line, with a gauge of just less than a metre, is one of the most extraordinary feats of colonial engineering. Twisting through gorges and over via-ducts, it climbs almost 7,000ft

The first 30 miles of track

above the hot coastal plain. The line once ran for 221 miles, linking up with the Sudanese rail system. But there is no likelihood of recommissioning the entire stretch: Sudan and Eritrea are at virtual war after the Khar-

A passenger train is pulled by a 440 class locomotive over the Caroben bridge on the Massawa to Asmara line, which was built in the 1890s

toum Government's attempts to destabilise its neighbour by trying to export Islamic

The railway once owned 18 oil-burning steam engines. They never ran fast: even the recently renovated ones are to 25mph. Evelyn Waugh vividly described the

Eritrean line in Scoop, poking fun at the trains that lumbered up the mountain so slowly that sengers had time to get off and pick berries on the way. Eritrea's determination to rebuild the line is typical of the self-help philosophy it has invoked to overcome the ravages of the war with Ethiopia.

President Afewerki, currently on his first visit to Britain since taking office, insisted that his country was not like other Third World nations, demanding Western aid and falling into debt. "We are trying to mobilise our own resources. We have a very prudent approach to borrow-

ing." Mr Afewerki said that he preferred to see business partnerships with Western countries and, turning his back on the former Marxist rhetoric of the liberation front he once led, spoke of investment, selfreliance, the private sector's role and his cordial relations with the World Bank and

International Monetary Fund. The President's foreign policy is equally pragmatic when a row blew up with Yemen over the occupation of a small Red Sea island, he agreed to international arbitration. The tribunal is sitting in London and Mr Afewerki says he will

Black Ame in wins place in

NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF STREET

Child sex fears halt adverts

Paris: A French advertising campaign for Evian mineral water featuring photographs of naked children has been abandoned after complaints that it could encourage paedophilia (Adam Sage

The campaign sparked pro-tests that it was insensitive after revelations in Belgium about Marc Dutroux, the selfconfessed paedophile kidnapper. The Dutroux affair has caused deep anxiety in France, where cases of child molesting have since been given widespread publicity.

Carl Sagan dies of pneumonia

Seattle: Carl Sagan, 62, the Pulitzer Prize-winning astro-nomer and storyteller who extolled the grandeur and mystery of the universe in lectures, books and on tele-vision, has died of pneumonia at a cancer research centre in Seattle. He had been suffering from preleukaemia syndrome, a bone marrow disease. (AP) Obituary, page 19

Burundi Army 'massacred 500'

Nairobi: Burundi's Tutsidominated Army was said to have massacred up to 500 Hutu civilians in what Amnesty International called a continuation of a "policy of systematic extermination of a section of population". The rights group said the massacre took place in Butaganza commune on December 3. (AP)

Tanker crew hurt in Falklands fire

The living quarters of an oil tanker was destroyed by a fire off the Falkland Islands. Eight of the 18 Latvian crew were taken ashore suffering from smoke inhalation and minor injuries, but they later recov-ered. Firefighters put out the blaze on the Panamanianregistered vessel. (AFP)

'Rich tax' to help Indonesian poor

Jakarta: President Suharto. who first sought voluntary donations, has now ordered individual and corporate tax-payers in Indonesia with annual incomes of more than 2 per cent, after tax, to a fund to help the poor. (AP)

Broadway Britons stage a tea-party

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

BRITISH thespians might be busy mounting their muchtrumpeted invasion of Broadway but that does not mean they do not have time for tea. Several dozen of Britain's leading actors took a break from storming New York this week to attend a high tea at the stately Players Club in Gramercy Square Park.

The likes of Elaine Paige. Michael Gambon, Fiona Shaw and Stephanie Beacham donned paper crowns, pulled crackers and munched cucumber sandwiches while bemoaning the excitability of merican audiences, lack of British news, and inconveniences of the Big Apple.

"I take tea in London, darling, absolutely," said the irrepressible Paige, who has won acclaim for her performance as the ageing diva Norma Desmond in Andrew Lloyd Webber's Broadway production of Sunset Boulevard. "Tea is the best time of day," she explained.

The unprecedented event was the "drunken inspiration" of Nicky Henson, making his Broadway debut as the foppish Lord Goring in Peter Hall's revival of Oscar Wilde's An Ideal Husband. "In the middle of the first night I said 'we ought to get all the Brits together." he

The high tea was served at large round tables covered with white tableclothes in the lounge of the Victorian clubhouse beneath a portrait of Edwin Booth, the club's founder and the brother of Abraham Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth.

Another at the party was Jim Dale. He has lived in New York for nearly 20 years and regularly offers visiting British actors tea on his terrace. "I know the feeling when you are all alone in a big city like this," he said.



best time of day"

£26,000 to contribute an extra Paige: "tea is the

No fuel like an old fuel

Delhi: Embarrassed Indian scientists yesterday conceded that they had been hoaxed by a "miracle herbal fuel".

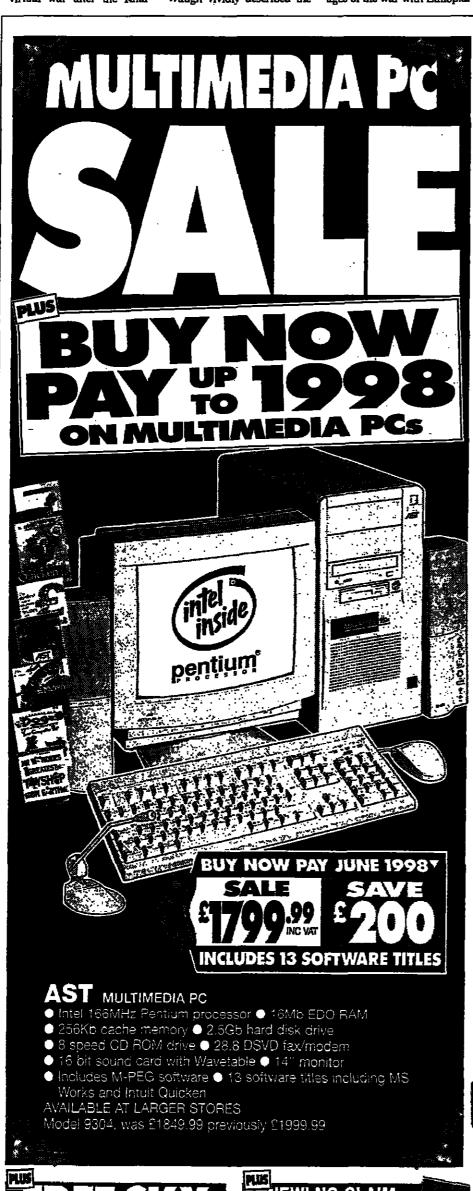
A report tabled in parlia-

ment by the Department of Science and Technology said an analysis of the liquid produced by Ponnaiah Ramar Pillai, from the village of Idayankulam in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, showed it to be a mixture of paraifin and

The mixture was intro-

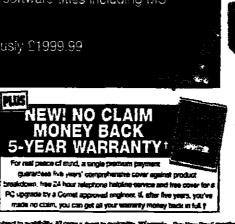
duced at the boiling stage and when the so-called fuel was set on fire, with considerable difficulty it emitted a thick smoke similar to the one emitted when camphor is burnt," the report said. "If it was really fuel, it should have caught fire instantly.

Mr Pillai had initially convinced scientists that he had made a discovery during ex-periments in which he produced fuel after boiling water with secret herb leaves. (AFP)



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Black American slang wins place in classroom

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

BLACK American English has been officially recognised as a distinct language in Oakland, California, where black children who speak it are in a majority in schools but consistently achieve belowaverage results.

The move, which was swiftly attacked as lowering standards and "an insult to the cognitive abilities of black children", makes standard English a second language for 28,000 children and offers bonuses to teachers who learn their vernacular.

The Oakland resolution will send ripples throughout the state. It was welcomed by black education officials in Los Angeles, which faces similar problems, but flies in the face of Proposition 209, the measure approved by voters last month to end "affirmative action" programmes.

Stubbornly low scores by black children in English and reading tests have been a simmering racial issue in America's inner cities for decades, blamed by traditionalists on the problem of bringing neighbourhood language to school, and by the authors of the controversial 1994 book differences between the races. This week's unanimous vote

by Oakland Unified School District officials gives black urban slang its own name, "Ebonics" — derived from "ebony" and "phonics" - and traces its roots to West Africa and slavery.

"West and Niger-Congo African language systems form the basis of a distinct language spoken by black Americans historically isolated from isolated from mainstream English by slav-

He goes to work She will be first

You're crazy Six million dollars

My mother's name is Mary

These are two of my friends who have just come

han' and walking becomes walkin'.

The Bell Curve on genetic ery and segregation," the insisted that the move was school district's resolution asserted.

Critics of the resolution have accused Oakland officials of mounting a ploy to qualify for extra federal funds for remedial English teaching for blacks on the same grounds that entitle the children of Spanish, Chinese and other foreign immigrants to extra teaching of English as a

foreign language. But Lucella Harrison, president of the school board,

Ebonics

He be goin' to work

My mama name Mary it's two of my friend,

She-uh be firs You crazy

they just come

Despite being labelled distinct languages by Oakland officials,

standard and "black" English do not have separate vocabular-

ies. Major differences in the latter include a simplified conjugation of the verb "to be" with only the infinitive used in the

present tense (hence he be goin' to work) and only the past participle used in the past tense (viz She been married for a long

Final consonants are also often dropped. Thus hand becomes

Six million dollar

sound of mainstream English in the classroom. "We tried remedial classes in the 60s and 70s and they did not work," she said. "We must do something different." Seventy-one per cent of Oak-

aimed simply at helping black

pupils who "tune out" at the

land's black schoolchildren are in special classes and 64 per cent have been held back at least a year because of poor achievement - a state of affairs which Elihu Harris, Oakland's black Mayor, said should be remedied by conventional means.

"Our commitment is to excellence in education," Mr Harris said, "and we will not tolerate or support any form of substandard English." Other black leaders gave a warning against equating the problems of black pupils with those of immigrant children struggling with a new language.
"I know that Latinos speak a

different language and I know my [black] cousins don't speak a different language," said Professor John McWhorter of the University of California, who is black. "It's an insult to



Michael Williams, 12, studies English literature at a school in Oakland, California

equal pensions

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

GURKHA veterans in Hong Kong are ready to sue the British Government, which they say cheated them of their pensions for decades.

The Gurkha Veterans' Association, which claims to speak for 85,000 members living in Nepal and 15,000 in Hong Kong, where many are hired as security guards, accuses Britain of reneging on an agreement struck in 1947 between Britain, India, and Nepai guaranteeing Gurkhas equal pension rights with British soldiers.

Their lawyer, Eric Urbani, says: The Gurkhas get £15 a month. British soldiers get £475. We want Britain to give that same money to the Gurkhas. If they won't, then they can give British soldiers £15, heard of this fund.

and that will be equal." Mr Urbani says that the 1947 agreement contained an annex stating that Gurkhas should receive far less pay and smaller pensions, but that the Nepal Government never signed this deal. A British garrison spokesman in Hong Kong insisted that the agreement was still binding.

Padam Bahadur Guring, a retired lance corporal and president of the Gurkha association, said: "We want once and for all to be told whether ve are mercenaries or not."

Mr Urbani also raised the quiestion of an £80 million trust fund, lodged in Britain, which has mysteriously disappeared. No British Army official in Hong Kong had

Gurkhas fight for | President fills final Cabinet vacancies

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

AFTER a series of last-minute decisions taken late at night, President Clinton yesterday filled his new Cabinet's final four vacancies.

One went to Andrew Cuomo, son of Mario Cuomo, the former Governor of New York, with whom Mr Clinton had an edgy relationship during the 1992 Democratic primaries. Mr Cuomo, 39, was nominated as Secretary at the Department of Housing and Urban Development where, as Assistant Secretary, he

developed a reputation for spirited enthusiasm that some thought bordered on brash. Mr Clinton made the surprise choice of Federico Pena. his Secretary of Transportation, as Energy Secretary havappoint a 14-member Cabinet with no Hispanics - a move that would have upset a large bloc of Democratic voters. In keeping with his prom-

ises to pick a Cabinet that "looks like America", the President's other choices are black. Alexis Herman, a White House aide, was nominated as Labour Secretary, and Rodney Slater, the federal highway administrator and a political ally from Mr Clinton's home state of Arkansas, will replace Mr Pena as Transportation Secretary.

The second-term Cabinet will have three blacks, one Hispanic, four women and a Republican. The first-term one had four blacks, two Hispanics, three women and no ing realised he was about to Republicans.

Clinton to improve screening of visitors

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON last night promised to establish a better screening process at the White House after it emerged that he had met a Chinese arms dealer whose firm, only months later, was implicated in smuggling weapons to

America. Mr Clinton said he was disappointed by the encounter, during a coffee morning. since it was "clearly inappropriate". At the same time, presidential aides struggled to explain the visit in February by Wang Jun, head of a large investment conglomerate that is owned by the Peking

Mr Clinton said there were many thousands of visitors to the White House, but a better way of screening them had to be developed. He added that he remembered nothing about the visit, but "nothing inappropriate came from it on the part of government action".

The encounter was revealed as the Justice Department launched a far-reaching investigation into the growing controversy surrounding questionable Asian contributions to the President and Hillary Clinton and the Democratic

A task force appointed by Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, issued a series of subpoenas to the White House and the Democratic National Committee, seeking all records relating to many party fundraisers and donors central to the deepening scandal that appears to be rapidly clouding Mr Clinton's second term. The Clintons' legal defence fund, set up two years ago to defray the costs of contesting myriad allegations, said it had also issued

More than \$2 million (£1.2 million) in debt over Whitewater, the Paula Jones sexual harassment case and other inquiries into the Clintons, the fund this week revealed for the first time that it had returned \$640,000 in dubious donations solicited before the election by Charles Yah Lin Trie, a long-standing friend of the Clintons. It was Mr Trie, a regular visitor to the White House, who secured the invitation for Mr Wang.





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John Motson, Des Lynam and Andy Gray

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Chinese accused of cheating on colony

By MICHAEL BINYON DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

IN UNUSUALLY blunt criti-cism of Peking, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, yesterday accused China of cheating on its legal commitments to Hong Kong, and said that plans to activate a parallel legislature before it gained sovereignty were unacceptable.

There was, he said, no justification for China to re-place the legislature elected openly and fairly" by more than a million people in Hong Kong. That action would be a "serious setback" for representative government in Hong Kong and China's basic law in the territory.

The message was reinforced by the summoning of Jiang Enzhu, the Chinese Ambassador, to the Foreign Office on Thursday evening.

In a tart comment, Mr Rifkind said: "Common sense suggests that a body chosen by a hand-picked 'electorate' of 400 is not, in any reasonable sense, a 'legislature constituted by election' as required by paragraph 49 of the 1984 Joint Declaration on the colony's

He added that China had solemnly committed itself in the declaration to co-operate with the British administration until the handover, and then to be bound by its promise that Hong Kong's legislature would be constitut-

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PERU SIEGE

Hard man of Lima rejects Japanese calls for compromise with guerrillas



Fujimori: has rejected any

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN LIMA

PRESIDENT FUJIMORI came out of his colonial government office in the centre of Lima to face the hostage crisis in true South American style. It was clear that he was not in any mood to adopt the diplomatic stance favoured by his Japanese cousins.

I am not going to have dialogue with terrorists and certainly not give in their main demand of releasing their imprisoned members." Senor Fujimori said in his DIPLOMACY -

hours after the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement stormed the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima.

The wide gap between the President's approach and that of the Japanese Government is expected to delay efforts to resolve the crisis. Tokyo has urged a "peaceful, calm manner" to ensure the safety of the 460 hostages, including 150 Japa-nese diplomats and businessmen. who are facing their fourth day in captivity. Yukihiko Ikeda, the Japa-

nese Foreign Minister, who arrived in Lima on Thursday night, looked uneasy during an hour-long meeting with Señor Fujimori. Mr Ikeda said the priority should be the

حكذا بن الملاحل

survival of the hostages. It may be that Japan wants Peru to strike a deal over the release of some of the rebels. But after the meeting, the President said: "In Peru we have taken a tough stand against insurgents and will contin-ue to do so." Señor Fujimori is known to favour the death sentence and has given a free reign to his security forces to "cleanse" Peruvian society of rebel sympathy, often

THE OPTIONS IN LIMA

rights.
The President's authoritarian style first became clear when he

staged a constitutional coup against his own Government in 1992, and closed down Congress and the He then held elections to give a

democratic face to his second mandate, which began in 1994, but has not stopped intervening in all decision-making by issuing numerous decrees. In an interview last vear, he said he was no fan of Western-style democracy, and that Peru had to be ruled with an "iron

at the cost of ignoring human fist". Señor Fujimori's parents left rights.

Japan in the 1940s and, like many Japanese immigrants, became shopkeepers. Their son studied hard, became an engineering lecturer and married into a well-to-do Japanese family.

Last year Señor Fujimori threw his wife, Susana Higuchi, out of the presidential residence, and she went to the press saying: "He has forgotten about his family's traditions and become a true South American dictator."

Peruvians confusedly call him El Chino, and he loves his nickname. "I speak Japanese with my three

children but my heart is with Peru. We do things differently in Peru. Democracy is a word for the West" he said during a local election rally last year, in which he dressed in a poncho and promised that he would wipe out all terrorists no matter how much blood has to be

instead! I goes on I ledge com

Señor Fujimori is widely regarded as a populist who sees his stay in power as a personal pilgrimage. In the past few months, the President has spent more time changing the Constitution to allow him to run for re-election in 1999 than on any

Rebels threaten to start killing hostages today

PERUVIAN terrorists say they will begin killing the 460 hostages they are holding in the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima today unless the Government meets their demands.

They set the deadline vesterday and reiterated their central demand. The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement gunmen want 458 of their imprisoned fellow rebels to be released, and safe passage for their leaders to jungle

The conditions for the 460 hostages held on two floors of the Ambassador's residence continued to worsen yesterday as they faced their fifth day in captivity. Signs put up by them at the windows of the building read: "We have no water. No light."

Four more hostages were released, after five elderly Japanese were freed on Thurs-

President Fujimori's Government has rejected the terrorists' demands, raising fears that time for negotiations is running out. Mr Fujimori's stance has clashed with that of the Japanese Government, which has sent Yukihiko Ikeda, the Foreign Minister, to Lima to mediate. It insists that nothing should be done to risk the hostages' lives.

A British Embassy spokesman said British security specialists had arrived in Lima to

advise the Peruvian security

at odds over how to deal with the crisis, Gabriella Gamini writes from Lima forces. American and Ger-

man forces were also reported in Lima, to give advice. All Western representatives involved insist that the crisis should be resolved with "calm gotiations".

We strongly deny that there are plans to storm the building with SAS shock troops. They are here just to give advice to the Peruvian services, and the security of the hostages is always a priority," said a British Embassy official.

Two Britons, David Griffiths, a businessman, and Roger Church, the British Embassy's deputy chief of mission, are among the hos-tages in the mock colonial building in the district of San Seventeen ambassadors,

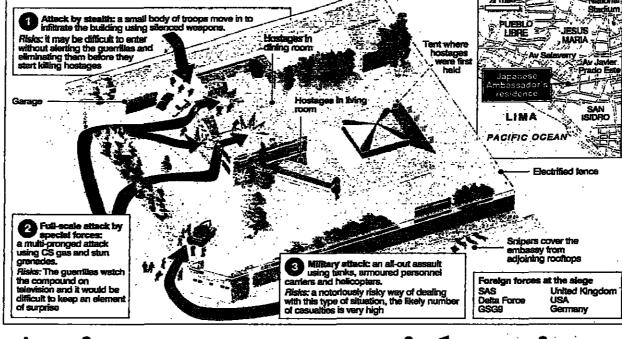
eight charges d'affaires and diplomats from 30 countries, Peru's anti-terrorist police chief Maximo Rivero, and the Foreign Minister, Francisco Tudela, are among the hostages, who also include 150 Japanese diplomats and businessmen and at least 150 members of Peru's political elite. The Red Cross has taken

on a mediating role and are delivering water, lavatory paper, towels and food to the door of the building. They also appear to be taking in mes-sages from the hostages'

Peru and Japan appear to be

The rebels, who include a woman, are demanding the release of their leader, Victor Pulay, and Lori Berenson, 27, an American woman sentenced to life imprisonment for taking part in a failed attempt to storm the Congress in 1995. The Tupac Amaru have targeted the Japanese community in Peru before, which suggests they are trying to strike at President Fujimori, the son of Japanese immi-

Rosa Elva, president of a Peruvian-Japanese Cultural Association, one of at least 100 women who were released from the building, said: "The rebels seemed very calm and collected. They were laden with weapons and heavy rucksacks and kept saying that things could go on for a long time. They were not nervous and seemed ready to give up



Anti-terror teams weigh options

By Michael Evans, defence correspondent

THE siege of the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima is being monitored by some of the most experienced counter-terrorist organisations in the world, including the SAS, the American

grants, for courting Japanese Delta Force and Germany's investment and aid. GSG9. None is likely to recommend a siege-breaking assault because the odds are formidable.

Yet among these experts there must be developing a potential action plan that could be implemented as a last resort in the event of a deterioration in the negotiations with the Tupac Amaru guerrillas and the shooting of hostages. These are the options: Assault by stealth, in which

a team of counter-terrorist special forces mounts an attack with silenced weapons in

TACTICS an attempt to seek out the

assault, storming the building, using maximum diversionary tactics. ☐ A massive attack with troops and tanks, armoured personnel carriers and heli-

The third would pose the biggest risk for the hostages because of the likelihood of many dying in the crossfire. Key to any military plan would be the element of surprise, but the location is not encouraging. The residence is surrounded by extensive grounds and television cameras are relaying every movebuilding. The guerrillas can watch their television screens for any sign of an assault. An all-out assault by heavily armed troops has been tried

before, with disastrous consequences. In 1985, about 100 people, including II supreme court judges, were killed in neighbouring Colombia in a siege of Bogotá's five-storey main lawcourts. By contrast, in early 1980

members of the same M19 group invaded a cocktail party at the Embassy of the Dominican Republic and took 50 hostages, including the American Ambassador and 13 other envoys. The President, Julio César Turbay Ayala, spent 61 days negotiating their release. No one was killed.

With the third and most extreme option effectively ruled out, the focus of any military option would be on a special forces operation. Provided they have the time to plan an assault, they have the weaponry, expertise and special equipment for a raid...

While the negotiations continue, an assault team will have the time to collect intelligence on the whereabouts of the guerrillas and hostages. the state of mind of the rebels and their weaponry. Some intelligence will already have been gleaned from those who have been released. It was a freed hostage in the Iranian Embassy siege in London in 1980 who provided a vital clue for the SAS when he described how the leader of the Arab terrorists appeared to be losing his credibility with the other members.

Niceties that must precede an attack

By MARC WELLER

ANY plans to use force to end the siege have to take into account the legal complications involving embassies.

The invaded compound does not constitute an island of Japanese territory. But, according to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the receiving state of a diplomatic mission suspends its right to exercise public powers over the embassy premises. Its agents, or other foreign forces, may not enter without the consent of the mission's head or the sending state's Government.

In principle, that inviolability persists even in times of national emergency or upheaval, as the International Court of Justice confirmed in

LAW the 1980 Tehran hostages case. Forces such as the SAS would require a request from Peru before launching a rescue mission. Peru, in turn, must seek permission from Tokyo. If that cannot be obtained, the legal doctrine of distress might be invoked. In several instances of hostage-taking in embassies, it was argued that the need to save the innocent must outweigh even the universally

principle of the inviolability of diplomatic missions. The author is an Assistant Director of Studies at the Centre of International Studies in the University of Cambridge.

held interest of upholding the



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Pro-Tibet film stars on Peking blacklist FROM GILES WHITTELL

IN LOS ANGELES

ANGERED by Hollywood's love affair with Tibet, Chinese authorities have drawn up a blacklist of stars who will not be allowed to go there. Harrison Ford, Brad Pitt,

Martin Scorsese and Jean-Jacques Annaud, the French director, have been barred from visiting the remote and beautiful mountain region invaded by China in 1951, an official said yesterday. News of the unusual black-

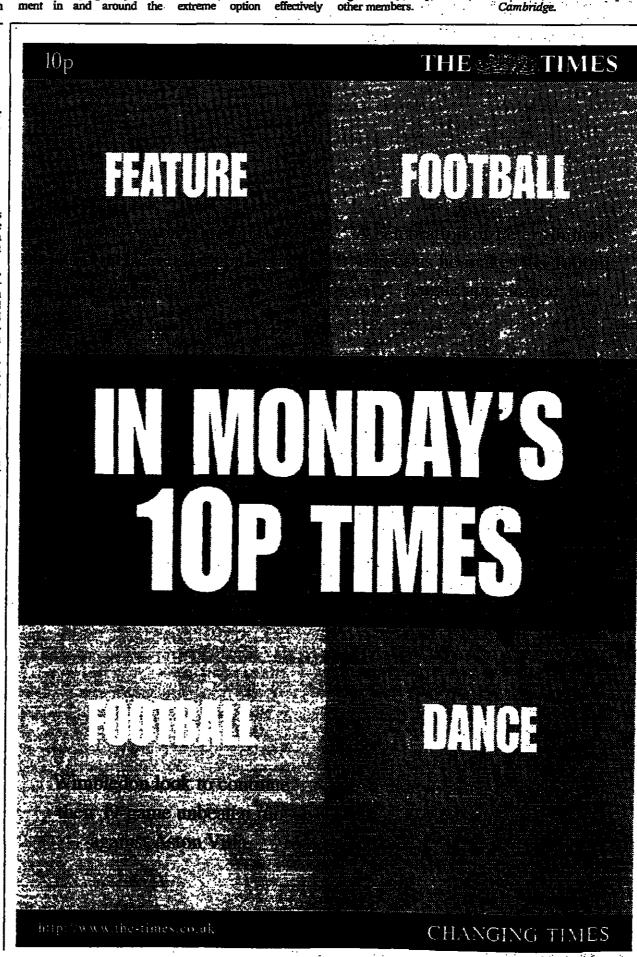
list emerged barely a week after the Walt Disney Company jeopardised its relations with China by refusing to halt production of Kundun, an epic being made by Scorsese on the life of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader.

In recent months Tibet has become the rugged retreat of choice for many Hollywood stars, and its demands for freedom has become their cause celebre. Peking had informed Disney executives that it wanted work on Kundun, being shot in India, to stop.

After many years as a voice in the wilderness on the Dalai Lama's behalf, Richard Gere. the actor and a Buddhist, has been joined by other household names in calling for an end to religious repression and direct Chinese rule in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital. Ironically, Gere's name is not on the list that was compiled by Tibet's State Security Office, an official from the Tibet Tourism Bureau said.

Ford is included with his wife, Melissa Mathison Ford, apparently because of her work as a scriptwriter on Kundun. Pitt, the heart-throb from A River Runs Through It, stars in a forthcoming film by Annaud about an Austrian prisoner of war who fled to Lhasa from India in the Second World War.

The Chinese move is a clear sign that Peking regards Hol-lywood as a powerful potential ally for the underground resistance movement in Tibet. led by monks, and for the



Unsteady Yeltsin goes on TV to pledge comeback

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Boris Yeltsin yesterday told Russia that he would be back at his office in the Kremlin on Monday morning and planned a busy work schedule to make up for his six-month absence due to

In the first televised address to the country since his heart bypass surgery six weeks ago, the Russian leader appeared to be fully aware of the most pressing issues facing the nation, but physically did not look completely recovered from his open heart surgery.

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"The country needs an active and energetic president, especially now," said Mr Yeltsin, who wore a brown cardigan and open-neck shirt. The doctors say, and I myself feel, the recovery period is over. On Monday the 23rd I will return to my office in the Kremlin. I'll be there at nine in

the morning."
In spite of his positive message, the Kremlin leader still looked weak. At times he seemed short of breath and his right hand appeared to shake when it was not resting on his lap. His message to the people was also clumsily delivered. Instead of an address to the nation, his television appearance took the form of a wellrehearsed question and answer session with an unnamed

interviewer. Nevertheless, President Yeltsin may have gone some way to easing concerns in the country that he is out of touch

with the day-to-day issues of state. He outlined his priorities and correctly identified the crisis over unpaid wages and uncollected taxes as the main issue to tackle on his return to the Kremlin.

The problem of the debt crisis, caused by companies not paying taxes and the state not paying pensions and wages, has led to a series of economic and social problems, which he promised would no longer be tolerated.

6 This country needs an active and energetic president, especially now 9

A connected issue, which he said required his urgent attention, was the dire situation in the military, where lack of funding and low morale has led to repeated warnings from generals of a collapse in national security. He said he would personally oversee the drafting of a new military doctrine

President Yeltsin described the Chechen conflict as a "knot which is being untangled with great difficulty", but promised that Moscow stood by its

peace agreement with the separatists. There has been much specu-

lation in Moscow about the possibility of a reshuffle of senior figures in the administration, and President Yeltsin did nothing to dispel rumours of a purge. He said that after reviewing the Government's work, including that of Prime Minister Viktor Cherno-myrida and Anatoli Chubais, the head of the Presidential administration, he had concluded that not enough effort had been made in tackling Russia's pressing problems in

Western diplomats said it was unclear whether the Russian leader intended to launch a sweeping reshuffle of his ministers and aides, although that could be the best way to reimpose his control over the affairs of state.

his absence.

Whatever his true state of health, the Russian leader is now committed to re-entering the political fray and his opponents are already waiting for him. General Aleksandr Lebed, the former security chief who was sacked by President Yeltsin in October, said yesterday that the Russian leader was already drinking again and predicted that the country would not be any more stable with his return to the Kremlin.

"The President has gone back to drinking," he said on German television. There is no hope in Russia any more."



Chechen murder suspects held

FROM RICHARD BEESTON THE MOSCOW

THE Chechen authorities announced yesterday that they had arrested suspects in the murder of six International Red Cross workers, and hinted the crime may have been orchestrated by Moscow.

Abu Movsayev, the top Chechen security official, said several people had been ap-prehended since Tuesday's cillings, but refused to say more. "Unfortunately there are many people and powerful organisations inside Chechnya and outside the

region who want to make the world see our republic as a land of barbarians and bandits," he said, adding that the "visible war with Russia is over, but the secret war is continuing".

Over the past week a series of violent incidents has shaken confidence in the Chechnya-Russia peace deal and the future of the tiny breakaway republic, due to hold its first parliamentary and presidential elections at the end of next month.

Salman Raduyev, a renegade Chechen guerrilla. seized 22 Russian paramilitary troops, the Red Cross workers were murdered, six Russian civilians were killed in Grozny and, lastly, a threeman delegation from a neigh-bouring republic was reportedly abducted by

🗖 Dushanbe: Guerrillas in Tajikistan - racked by civil war for four years — seized 23 hostages yesterday, including seven foreign United Nations military observers.

The hostage-takers threatened to shoot the 23 unless their leader's brother, held by opposition fighters, released. (Reuter)

Paris bans Swiss cattle after BSE border blockade

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS AND PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

terday bowed to pressure from its cattle farmers and extended its ban on beef imports to Switzerland, the country worst affected by "mad cow" disease

after Britain. Farmers in eastern France have been pressing for such a ban, with some mounting a blockade of the border, on the ground that Swiss cattle could infect their herds and that importation of beef from the country was undermining consumer confidence. Austria, Germany and Italy have already taken measures to ban cattle from Switzerland.

Yesterday, Philippe Vasseur, the French Agriculture Minister, said Paris would ask the European Union to establish a common policy on Swiss beef, as it has with Britain.

"This precautionary measure is taken pending the official position of the European Union. It is justified by the absolute priority we place on protecting consumers." M Vasseur said.

Switzerland has reported 230 cases of BSE and Britain 160,000. The Swiss authorities say they will eradicate the disease through a SFro.5 million (£2.9 million) programme to slaughter at least 1,500 cows. But the programme was not enough to stem anger in France, where cattle farmers' earnings have fallen sharply

this year. Paris at first tried to resist famers' pressure, arguing that a nationwide ban was unnecessary. However, local au-

THE French Government yes- thorities near the Swiss border paved the way for a government climb-down when they banned Swiss beef from the Doubs department in October.

Yesterday M Vasseur said some Swiss beef products could enter France under "exceptional circumstances" and tight sanitary conditions. But he said there would be no exceptions to the ban on Swiss

Despite the ban, French farmers at the Swiss border said yesterday that they would not stop their blockade of lorries carrying caule. They have forced several such vehi-cles to turn back to Switzerland since Wednesday.

An official at the Swiss veterinary office said the French decision appeared to be motivated more by commercial and political criteria than by health matters. Last month 652 head of cattle were exported to France, as opposed to 28 between January and

The Swiss Farm Producers Association accused the French of verging on hypocrisy". It claimed that French companies fraudulently relabelled contaminated British cattle feed and re-exported it to Switzerland before 1989, and that Paris had not taken

action against them.
Austria, Germany and Italy banned Swiss beef imports several months ago. With 68 outbreaks of BSE in 1995, and 45 so far this year, the epidemic is regarded as declining in

Juppé finds top job hard to stomach

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARES

PRESIDENT Chirae has advised France's unpopular Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, to put on weight as part of his attempt to convince voters that he is a sensitive and "cuddly" sort of chap. Widely seen as cold and arrogant, M Juppé's attempts to improve undermined by his slender and angular frame.

Faced with disastrous opinion poll ratings, the Prime Minister has been striving to earn at least sympathy, this week bringing out a book detailing the emotional torture he has suffered during his 19 months in charge of the Government. The work was ridiculed by the press, which said he should offer new

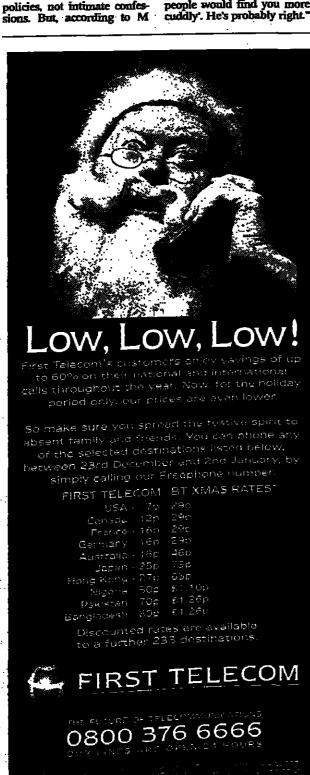


Juppé: advised to adopt weightier image

Chirac, what France wants from its Prime Minister is neither a change of political tack nor a more human face -

but a bigger belly.

The Prime Minister said:
"The President often tells me, You ought to put on 10 kilos, people would find you more





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Royalists hope Senate role is prelude to popular Astrid taking throne rather than 'lightweight' brother

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Signal for a future queen

BELGIAN royalists are mus-ing again on a "dream ticket" for the future monarchy of their fractured country.

The excuse came when Princess Astrid. the daughter of King Albert II and Queen Paola, decided to exercise a royal prerogative and take a seat in the Senate.

The move late last month revived hope among many loyalists that the popular and serious-minded Princess, 34, who was once high on the list of eligible partners for the Prince of Wales, could eventually reign instead of her older brother. Breaking with the quaint decorum which the Belgian media reserve for royalty. Le Soir wondered: "Is Astrid's decision ... the sign of a possible preparation for

by CHARLES BREMNER exercising the royal function

BRUSSELS FILE

in the event that Prince Philippe refuses the succession?" The idea is not implausible. Uncertainty has lately surrounded the succession of the family which has ruled since Lord Palmerston persuaded the reluctant Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, uncle of Queen Victoria, to reign over

the newly invented country in

1831. The rumours began in 1991 when the late King

Baudouin had the old Salic law changed to enable a woman to succeed to the throne.

On the sudden death of the childless Baudouin two years later, many Belgians were surprised when Albert, the late King's brother, took the throne rather than passing it directly to his son Philippe, as expected. It was obvious to many that Princess Astrid.

Traditionalists want Santa sacked TO THE chagrin of traditionalists, Belgian children are more confused than ever this Christmas by the problem of duelling Santas. Like their cousins in The Netherlands, little Walloons and Flem-

ings know that St Nicholas is an austere,

thin, white-bearded old man in a bishop's

mitre who turns up with presents on a boat

from Spain on December 5. Sinterklaas, as he is known in Dutch, is celebrated in schools and by a rush at the toy shops in early December. He is, however, increasingly rivalled by the jolly. fat, red-clad man who flies in three weeks later. The American-inspired Santa still misses most Belgian chimneys, but his image is omnipresent on television and in the shops. Unhappy over the confusion. church and parents' groups are urging shops to eschew the commercial interloper. tive, a staunch Catholic and mother of four, would make a good monarch.

In contrast, the unmarried Philippe, 36, is often depicted as a lightweight and illequipped for the job. The speculation subsided last ummer when "Le Petit Prince", as he is known, proclaimed his intention of ruling, but now he has again been upstaged by his sister.

Their father, once known as playboy, has emerged as a force for unity in the maelstrom driven by the crisis over child murders, corruption and the separatist pressure from Flanders. But the Princess's supporters say that as a modern woman, a Queen Astrid would be even better at holding Belgium together.

"She has everything," notes one admirer. "She is a sainte-épouse ... she's a leader, a perfect role model." On top of that traditionalists love the fact that Archduke Lorenz of Austria. Her banker husband. is a member of the Habsburg house, one of Europe's oldest dynasties. For her maiden speech in

the senate, Princess Astrid called for a moral reawakening, a return to family values and a rejection of the culture of selfishness which, she implied, also afflicted the governing classes. Delivered as tradition dictates, half in Dutch and half in French, her speech was heavily applauded. Only the Vlaams Blok, the extreme-right Flemish party.



Bleak fable hailed as EU alarm call

PRINCE PHILIPPE does not emerge well from French-speaking Belgium's best-seller of the season. He is the weak future king in Le Siège de Brurelles, a dark fable set in 2007, which is being both hailed as a wake-up call for Belgium and European federalists and vilified as an anti-Flemish tract.

The plot is set in a Brussels which has collapsed into a version of Sarajevo or prewar Shanghai, with a rich European Union quarter guarded by international police while the impoverished locals. excluded from the single currency, scrounge for survival. The tale, by Jacques Neirynck, an engineering professor, weaves present fact with fiction to recount the takeover of Brussels, now a bilingual enciave inside Flanders, by a fascist Flemish Führer who is half English. The hero, his cousin, tries to save the country. To the cries of "All for Flanders. Flanders for Christ". Flemish militia wage "ethnic cleansing" against Walloons and Muslim

A good read and fortuitously timed for Belgium's present mood of siege, the book has struck a chord because its premise is deemed to be just plausible. Flanders, prosperous and nationalist, is pulling away from the impoverished Walloon half of the country and predictions of the imminent break-up of Belgium are commonplace.

Mr Neirynck's yarn, now in its fourth

Eclip:

print run since September, is also welcomed for its insights into the fate of the EU's federal drive. In his vision, the dawn of the single currency in 1999 has consolidated the carve-up of Europe as a Franco-German empire. Britain has become poor and impotent outside the EU, but it re-emerges with a vengeance in the book's climax.

Seasonal subsidy for Lapland cheers tourist trade

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

SANTA CLAUS may be delivering extra toys to Brussels this year. The gesture is the least the Commission could expect after it sent £102,000 of European Union funds to renovate his Lapland home and train his little helpers.

The subsidy from the EU's regional aid programme has gone to install more comfort-able surroundings and a better workshop at the Santa Claus Office and Village at Rovaniemi, in the Finnish Arctic, which he is said to consider his main dwelling. Finland qualified for the

aid, which includes E21,000 for training the elves to help him to reply to 700,000 letters a year, because the Lapland region is experiencing an economic slump. "It's not that we believe in Santa, but that this stimulates business and creates employment," said the spokeswoman for Monika Wulf-Mathies, Commissioner for the Regions.

The Rovaniemi complex, which now includes computers and video-conferencing for Santa, draws tens of thousands of tourists to Finland, a big proportion on charter flights from Britain. Thirteen flights a day, and one by Concorde, have been bringing visitors to Rovaniemi.

The other day the Spice Girls dropped in with their wish list for Joulupukki, as Santa is known in Finnish. "Now it's not so crowded, I can have a quiet chat with the very young children," a grate-

ful Santa told visitors this week. "I'm able to have some of my books with me - like my guide to the world's chim-

neys." However the largesse of Brussels has upset the reindeer at Santa's homes in Sweden and Norway, where local authorities also make much of the tourist potential. The Finnish authorities note that most children know Santa lives in Lapland: other countries receive only some 140,000 letters a year. The nearest rival, Drobak, near Oslo, gets half the visitors of

The Santa industry is serious business for the Nordic states, as well as for Canada.

Rovaniemi, Santa's Finnish

helpers say.

which has its own branch Russia has lately joined the act with trips to visit Dyed Moroz (Grandfather Frost), a cousin of Santa. who traditionally turns out accompanied by an ice-maiden for new year festiv-

There was no comment on Finland's jingle bells subsidy from Nikolaus van der Pas, the chief spokesman for Jacques Santer, the Commission President

Mr Van der Pas did, however, sign his Christmas card to journalists this year "Santer's Klaus".

Steel strikers riot in Belgium

Brussels: Hundreds of striking steelworkers rioted yesterday in Tubize to protest against a European Union decision to block subsidies designed to rescue their ailing company. Without the money, their steel mill faces bankruptcy with the likely loss of 1,826 jobs.

More than 1,000 strikers,

Greek ports protest traps British drivers Smith, appealed to Stavros

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

A FIVE-DAY strike by Greek dockworkers and merchant seamen has closed all the country's ports, stranding about 30 British lorry drivers in Patras, where they were due

Soumakis, the Greek Merchant Marine Minister, to help the Britons. "The Minister promised to do what he could," Gordon Bernard, the British Consul said. The drivers were anxious to

catch last ferries from Calais on Christmas Eve. "Any delay from Patras beyond Saturday, and they'll be too late," Mr

Yesterday afternoon it was hoped a few foreign-run ferries might leave Patras.

JESUS CHRIST

SUPERSTAR

Dec & Fri 27 Dec

this section

team on:

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to get ferries to Italy. The strike was scheduled to some masked and armed with batons, smashed bank end at dawn today, but windows, wrecked telephone militant seamen's unions cabins and looted a police were yesterday threatening to station, the Belga news agen-cy reported. (AP) extend it. The British Ambassador, Sir Michael Llewellyn-**OPERA & BALLET** THEATRES DRURY LANE THEATRE ROYAL SS cc (Big fee) 24hr 7 days (1171 494 5000/344 4444/420 0000 Grps 484 COLISEUM 0171 632 830 APOLLO 494 5070/344 4444 UNTIL 4 JAN Mon to Sat 230 8 / 30 (big fee) CC 344 4444420 0000 flee Grps 494 5454/413 3311/436 5586 ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S 0990 500 800/344 4444/420 0000 THEY'RE BACK! 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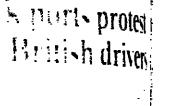
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OPINION

As Miss Pamela Anderson's regular bulletins show, the Americans have perfected the art of promotion



THEATRE

Playing Falstaff as an affable saloon-bar johnny, Leslie Phillips makes his debut at the RSC

THE



🗰 POP

Folk singer and lesbian icon Ani DiFranco presents an uncompromising face to London



ON MONDAY

Richard Briers in A Christmas CaroL and reviews of the the weekend's other top shows

Pamela Anderson, the prodigiously sculp-tured young lady whose adventures on the television series That damn British reserve has to go Baywatch have so increased awareness of safety procedures at sea, has announced that she is

to Samuel Beckett. We shall just

Meanwhile, Miss Anderson's

latest bulletin (or perhaps it isn't

the latest, I may be confused)

touches on her spiritual health.

She is, she says, bonding inward-

ly" on the advice of a shrink. And

by the way, the husband is back.

There is a case for seeing the Virgin

Queen as the original John Birt or Michael Grade. Feeling that those pilot programmes Henry IV parts

one and two had not exhausted Falstaff's comic possibili-ties. Elizabeth I reputedly commissioned an episode in which the old buffer fell in love. And Shakespeare, ever the pro. came up with a

marvellous mix of pranks and

jokey revenges in which all end up punished for their follies: not only the lecherous

Falstaff but Master Ford, who

wrongly thinks the knight is

having an affair with his wife,

and Master Page, who plans

to marry his daughter to a

simpering dimwit.

The Merry Wives was always good, harmless fun, and

remains good, seasonal fun. But would either Elizabeth or

Birt commission an entire series from Ian Judge on the

basis of his present cast? I fear they would demand changes

- and not on the periphery, but at the centre of the sitcom.

his jaunty moments, but al-

ways seems less a majestic

Leslie Phillips's Falstaff has

I don't know about you, but I

have to wait for her books.

find this riveting. No, not the daily updates on Miss Anderson's wellbeing. What I find fascinating quitting the series to write books. That was this week's announceis the contrast between British and ment. Last week she announced that she was quitting her husband. Her actual words after confirming American styles in self-promotion. Put bluntly, they do their hype brilliantly; we, on the whole, do it the split were: "He is a wonderful appallingly. The reason they do it man and he is in recovery for so well is that American publicists (or, in Miss Anderson's case, selfalcohol abuse and I am there to support him" - a sentence of such publicists) actually believe in what paradoxical and inscrutable logic that I wonder whether Miss Anderson, in her new literary career, could be Malibu's answer

they are saying.

And as the splurge of Evital coverage showed this week, this shining eyed certainty rubs off even on supposedly hard-nosed journalists. We, too, start to believe that we are reporting something important, even when the evidence of our own eyes tells us that the product is desperately average.

In Britain our innate self-mockery gets in the way of our own attempts at hype. This week, for instance, the actor Jeremy Irons

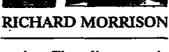
came up with a very British piece of hype. He threatened to leave the country if his new film, Lolita, is

Oh dear. The words "squib" and "damp" have rarely been more aptly conjugated. For a start, nobody believes him. Secondly, who cares if he goes? Thirdly -and this is the biggest crime when it comes to hyping your film — his remarks were barely noticed. He was speaking at the dismally attended closing ceremony of Cine-ma 100. And since this was itself a very British event, nobody had bothered to hype it in advance.

To make matters worse, this happened just as Madonna was sweeping across every British front page. The contrast between blinding American self-confidence and stuttering British self-deprecation was cruelly displayed.

These are vital matters. We are

IN THE ARTS



pouring millions of lottery pounds into "reviving" the British film industry. But if we don't grasp the essential point — that it's the brash, unselfconscious hyping of Hollywood movies which makes

them world-beaters - then we don't have a hope of producing regular £150-million smash hits. Incidentally, have you noticed

the new, virulent strain of hype rampant in America? I call it Celebrity Gush. It works like this. You invite very famous people to your premiere. After the show you ask them if they enjoyed them-selves. "Wow, terrific," they reply politely. The next thing they know, their "Wow! Terrific!" is plastered in 3ft letters on your billboard.

Someone in America worked this stunt to fabulous effect on behalf of the Cirque du Soleil, the acrobatic troupe at the Albert Hall next month. Its publicity material is a magnum opus of Celebrity Gush. "This is it! The pinnacle!" Robin Williams apparently de-clared. "A wonderful fantasy." Bill Clinton simpered. Harrison Ford said that the company "re-inventpaper clip?) And Francis Coppola waxed lyrical in two languages ("vive le cirque! wonderful!")

At the moment, such Celebrity Gush can be weighed against newspaper reviews before the punter spends his dosh. But one day promoters will abolish critics' tickets altogether, and just rely on the celebs, the hype and the gossip columns to publicise their shows. That will be sad. Somewhere in the process of bringing out a blockbuster movie or musical, some-body should tell the public honestly whether it is any good.

nd now, from our Department of Light Irony, comes Cheering news about the British Museum, where they predict a £20 million deficit by the year 2000, rejoice in employing not a single accountant among their

1.100 staff, and have received a report that castigates their financial controls as being Neolithic, if not downright Palacolithic.

So are they a little touchy on the question of money? Au contraire! Next month the BM launches its own Money Gallery, tracing the 'amazing variety and uses" of

filthy lucre over 4,000 years. Actually, it is not quite the BM's own gallery. The new venture will be called the "HSBC Money Gallery", in somewhat fulsome acknowledgement of a donation from the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. Rumours that HSBC cashpoints will be inserted into the BM's hallowed walls are of course entirely delicious . . . sorry, malicious.

What does the BM's army unworldly curators make of all this? An unintended hint comes, perhaps, in a statement from the BM's press office. "In spite of its importance," the Bloomsbury innocents sniff sadly, "money is not easily understood." You can say that again, darlin'.

The stars Yet so much else in Judge's revival is fine. Tim Goodchild has designed a lovely set, with a distant Windsor Castle looking across fields at leaf-encrusted timbering that effortlessly changes from courtyard to house to pub. You might expect the ruffs placed above the suits, overcoats and baggy plus-fours to look like corrugated neckbraces, but

gourmand johnny whose tipple would be not sack, but G&T. As

he is also sprightly and only superficially fat, he

misses the comedy inherent in a man-mattress creakily readying himself for adultery, then escape. What's worse, neither he nor Edward Petherbridge's Ford seem to care much if he ends up in bed with Susannah York's Mrs Ford.

Petherbridge may swirl offstage with a wall of "I am horn-mad" at one point, but mostly he plays the putative

cuckold as a thin, repressed result that his The Merry Wives jealousy simof Windsor ply isn't powerful enough RST, Stratford to raise the

comic stakes.

Opportunity after opportunity goes begging, not least in the scenes in which the disguised Ford must sit and squirm while Falstaff describes his erotic aims. The moment when Petherbridge empties the washing hamper where he thinks Phillips is hiding is funny, not because of his desperation, but because he fills the stage with half a department store of lingerie.

the mix of the Elizabethan and the vaguely modern seems agreeably exotic. And there are two wonderfully warm wives in Joanna McCallum and (understandably, given her man) a sometimes melancholy York.

Moreover, there is a genuine standout among the smaller parts. As the snooty French doctor, Caius, Guy Henry's wit and poise stay intact despite his having to spout more naughty double-enten-dres than Shakespeare wanted. Why doesn't someone give this actor the bigger opportunities his sharp performances merit? In fact, why not give him his own sitcom?

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Leslie Phillips — a Falstaff more affable saloon-bar johnny than majestic gourmand — and Cherry Morris (Mistress Quickly)

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POP Ani DiFranco

Vega and Michelle Shocked. and she still plays the occa-LA2, WC1 sional Woody Guthrie song at her shows. But, at 26, Ani DiFranco is a new, tougher breed of folk singer from a tribution companies in different generation. A lesbian Europe who seem to think role model and tirelessly indehave something to do with her record company. pendent entrepreneur (all eight of her albums have been This led neatly into Napoleon, a stern warning of the perils released on her own Righteous musicians face when accept-Babe record label), she uses her songs to explore her ing the corporate shilling. She paused several times to emotions in forthright language and often self-laceratwrap black tape around the

Hard act to follow

New York coffee house/college

circuit that nurtured Suzanne

Onstage, she runs a tight

ship. At the LA2 she was accompanied only by drum-

mer Andy Stochansky and

bass player Sara Lee (formerly

of the Gang of Four). At the

front DiFranco cut a strong, slightly severe figure in black

waistcoat and trousers, a ring

through her nose, hair short

and tufty. Her banter between

songs was friendly but highly strung, as she jokily com-plained about always playing

to audiences full of expatriate

seeing her reflection in a

mirror and the nerve of cer-

tain representatives from dis-

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ing detail.

ferociously percussive picking style which she used to propel numbers such as Blameless. with its clipped, funky undertow and jazz-like scat interludes. While many of her songs were driven by a quietly seething anger, there was poetry in her words. "The wind is ruthless/The trees shake angry fingers at the sky," she sang in Done Wrong, an unbearably poignant number in which her

fingers of her right hand, a

sensible precaution given the

whisper to a raging snarl and back again. It was a mightily impressive display which confirmed that DiFranco has the talent to become a major international star, capable perhaps of occupying a niche somewhere between Tori Amos and Alanis Morissette. Whether she will allow it to happen is another

voice rose from the merest

DAVID SINCLAIR

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Musicians' superstitions are legendary. None more so than Pavarotti's, one of which is to find

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loaded gun in his pocket...

Mourning, the consolation of a philosopher

Daniel Johnson on the moral and intellectual legacy of Gillian Rose

J also a practical problem: it is not easy to turn the cternal into the everyday. Mourning, which is active evocation and commemoration rather than a passive sense of loss, still seems the best and most natural response to death. The young Robert Burns wrote a dirge entitled Man was made to Mourn, and anyone who has been bereaved knows what solace the act of

lamentation may bring.

Mourning is a state of mind unlike any other sadness, in that it cannot be cancelled out by happiness: time may soothe the pain of grief, but the sense of absence remains forever. Bereavement is absolute, a loss without hope of finding. Not even new life - the birth of a child or grandchild, say — can compensate for death. Hence reflections on mortality and immortality always have a funereal ring, as though we were only prepared to contemplate our own

finiteness at another's obsequies. Although mourning is natural, it must still be learnt. Small children do not understand death but they have some inkling of its horror. Soon after the death of her greatgrandmother, my three-year-old daughter asked me whether she. too, would one day have to die. When I said yes, she burst into tears, wailing: "I don't want to die!" Not even the prospect of being reunited with Great Granny in Heaven could console her.

"I may die before my time." wrote Gillian Rose, the outstanding

philosopher of her generation. She did, exactly a year ago: still in her forties, with all to live for. She had endured cancer for three years. and made the most of her time on death row by writing three books. The only one to appear while she was still alive was Love's Work.

harrowingly beautiful and teasingly indiscreet autobiographical meditation, which has reached a wide readership here and

Love's Work revealed the evolution of Gillian's thinking from reason to revelation, from a secularised Jewish background via utopian Marxism to an ever-deeper thought. Her deathbed conversion to Anglican Christianity scandalised some, but she saw her whole life as the preparation for this supreme epiphany. Her baptism was the end of her crucifixion. She believed in order that she might understand her own disbelief; her philosophy understood the world in order to make belief possible again.

The first of what will be two posthumous books by Gillian Rose takes mourning as one of its central themes. Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation (Cambridge University Press, £9.95 paperback) brings together her political and religious ideas, to focus on one great perennial ques-tion: what is the law, mundane or transcendent, and whence does it derive its legitimacy?

In the first chapter of this strenuously demanding but re-warding book, "Athens and Jerusalem: a tale of three cities", Gillian Rose surveys the wasteland of our age from the vantage point of an intellectual determined to overcome her alienation. Athens is the city of rational politics: Jerusalem is its opposite, a Utopian community: while the invisible, internalised third city is that of capitalism, private property and modern legality. Modernity has also misbegotten a fourth city, the antithesis of

Tetting over bereavement is not only an intellectual but also a practical problem: it civic life, which is symbolised by Auschwitz. Through her urban metaphysics. Gillian sets herself the task of reinvigorating a disenchanted humanity which squats in the ruins of hallowed civilisations.

The book has on its dustjacket a painting which meant a great deal to her: Poussin's The ashes of Phocion collected by his widow. The statesman Phocion, 40 times governor of Athens, was unjustly condemned for treason and forced to poison himself with hemlock. His burial within the city walls was forbidden and to complete his disgrace, his corpse was cremated by a foreigner and was left

Poussin's canvas is dominated by the Acropolis and its splendid buildings, but in the foreground Phocion's widow is gathering up her husband's ashes while her maid looks out for danger.

In discussing this picture. Gillian Rose recalls her correspondence with Sister Wendy Beckett, the popular art historian, who had devoted one of her BBC2 pro-grammes to the Poussin. Sister Wendy saw the widow's defiance of the arbitrary tyranny of Athens, symbolised by the gleaming temples in the background, as an act of perfect love and self-sacrifice, which she equated with the idealised ethics of Jerusalem. Gillian Rose, the political philosopher, gently rebuked Sister Wendy, the anchoress, for her unworldliness: "The gathering of the ashes is

a protest against arbitrary power; it is not a protest against power and law as such... To acknowledge and to re-experience the justice and injustice of the partner's life and death is to accept the law, it is not to transgress it - mourning becomes the law." What did Gillian Rose

mean by her cardinal idea. "mourning be-comes the law"? Most studious of women, the young Gillian sympathised with campus revolutionaries. Her first book, The Melancholy Science.

acknowledged advice from Ulrike Meinhof, a West German journalist who became the co-leader of the notorious Baader-Meinhof terrorist group, and killed herself in 1976 while in prison. Meinhof's tragedy intellectuals - "Hitler's children" but it was also an extreme case of a more general Western malaise that afflicted the 1968 generation: the politics of ideological despair.

B ut Gillian's politics moved on, and in her later writings she sought to reconcile the alienated intelligentsia to legitimate political activity per se. Her own mourning of the lost Utopia of the New Left had, especially since 1989 and the "end of history". become a fascination with the state. the church and their common

Gillian Rose was prescient not only about her own death, but also her friends' sense of loss, a loss which she refused to countenance. 'I am living my dying," she used to tell us. She is gone all the same. There is solace in company. Her family. friends and students gathered recently in Bloomsbury to hear readings, to reminisce and to mourn. Jesus said: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." We are still waiting to be comforted. Yet, as Gillian herself wrote, "The work of mourning is difficult but not interminable." If the starting point, of her influence, her mourning is our consolation and her transfiguration.

The perils of writing about the living or the recently dead demand discretion, says Tom Pocock

A thirst it seemed that writing a biography would come easily to a journalist. After all, it is only an extended interview: 100,000 words instead of 1,000. But then the obstacles began to appear the subject's self-regard, false memories and, most worryingly, the clatter of skeletons tumbling out of

cupboards.

Also, whereas the journalist could feel supported by the power of the press, this would be an encounter of individuals, one to one. The biographer could become aware that his, or her, subject was so much more interesting and important than himself. Could one have half-emulated the feats of this war hero, or written anything half so memorable as this literary lion? Of course not.

So, first of all, a degree of inferiority must be overcome, but not to the extent that breeds a chippiness. The relationship between biographer and his living subject is a delicate one. Am I a magistrate or a counsellor? Am I asking what to him, or her, and to me, sounds an impertinent ques-tion because it is important to understanding, or because I want to cut him down to my size?

When a biography is "authorised" and the biographer

depends upon his subject's cooperation, the problems are obvious. Does he ask the embarrassing questions and, if so, does he accept an answer he suspects is, at best, How a biographer survives a survivor

archbishop, does he publish and be damned as a betrayer of confi-dences? If he sticks to the agreed rules and his subject's veto, does he write a second book a couple of years later which, it might be argued disingenuously, is not ham-pered by such constraints? If the biographer yields to that temptation, he can expect serialisation in a Sunday newspaper and also, per-haps, blackballing by the literary club he had hoped to join.

Having attempted two books about living people and recognised that because of scruples, the por-traits were not as rounded as they might have been, I turned to subjects who had died within living memory. On these voyages of discovery, the surf could also be heard breaking on the reefs. Families and friends may have cultivated fond legends and can be reluctant to risk challenge, let alone demolition, even if neither is the biographer's intention.

There was the Edwardian literevasive? If the subject seems to have any lion, whose grandson - a

tired but with a reputation for ferocity when roused - was guardian of the flame. His grandfather's imaginative prose was obviously vulnerable to amateur Freudian analysis, and an overkill of psychobabble had recently been applied by another biographer who, the guardian made it clear, would risk grievous bodily harm if he again sought access to the archives.

nother literary figure had, his daughter confided, been La philanderer, and she was reluctant to see his achievements diminished by scandal. The agreed solution was that she would provide all possible help — including access to unpublished letters and diaries — on condition that she could be the first to read the typescript and, if necessary, censor it. She agreed that the philandering could not be ignored but the biographer had no wish to make a meal of it and a compromise was reached, the daughter showing

particular mistress had been a major influence on the writer's life and work — and she was not only alive but still married to a famous husband who might, or might not, be aware of her infidelity. It was unnecessary to name her in the book, only to identify her by a few references to those who already knew the story. Having no wish to embarrass, this biographer tried to warn the

be recognisable to readers of her late lover's biography. This proved impossible, since she lived abroad and a mutual friend, who agreed to convey the message, lost heart at the thought of the husband opening his letter by mistake, or picking up a telephone extension.

So, without such a warning to the former mistress, the book was

lady in question that she would not

published. Then, without warning to the biographer, the lady met him by chance at the house of another mutual friend, where the book was prominently displayed on a draw-ing-room table. Did she realise who

he was and that he knew her secret? questions about his subject that he had longed to ask? I will never know, we talked only about the

Such near misses have prompted me to adopt the Hundred Year Rule. When the subject has been dead for a century there will be no snarls from defensive friends, and even descendants will be likely to see failings as entertaining, if not

Yet here, too, are problems. After months of reading letters, diaries and accounts by contemporaries, the biographer will have got as close to his subject as the laws of mortality will allow.

One danger is that without an animate being to concentrate upon, the vacuum is filled by the biogra-pher himself identifying with his subject: "I can see why you wrote about him," they will say. Or, as the author may know more about his character than anybody else, there is the risk of becoming proprietorial. The discovery of a letter showing the subject acting out of character — or what it was assumed to be — can prompt a Lady Bracknellish reaction worthy of an outraged friend or relation: "He would never have behaved like

Tom Pocock's most recent book is A Thirst For Glory: The Life of Admiral Sir Sidney Smith (Aurum

Desperately seeking sainthood

Evita Peron had everything it took to achieve secular canonisation

Great's granddaughburgha was a child, parents set her a test. They asked her to choose between a pile of jewellery and a Bible. The girl was no fool. She chose the Bible. She was revered, feted and

eventually canonised St Eadburgha. These days she would be declared BBC Personality of the The craze for secular saints

seems to know no bounds. Its climax, or nadir, is the current competition for the nation's most distinctive personality run by BBC Radio's Today Show. The contest testifies to the maxim that tabloid journalism is best left to tabloids.

nalists were blatantly nominated by suggestion on the programme. tive Party traditionally organised this award for

cher, who won it seven times while at No 10. She was pipped in 1990 when the supporters of one Lai Krishan Advani out-organised the Tories and the contest was declared invalid by the ever-loyal BBC. This year the party got its act together and delivered John Major as the only male finalist.

There are things that the Conservatives can still do well. Labour's response was too obvious and fell into the Advani trap. Tony Blair's

nomination was banned. Any contest that pits a prime minister against a Burmese free-dom fighter, and the two of them against a group of fame-for-a-day heroines, has to be daft. An outcome that is decided by who can organise the most anonymous telephone votes is a contest in button-

pushing. Will the anti-gun lobbyists outvote the anti-homosexual lobby-ists? Will the wounded teacher outvote the brave widow? The BBC claims to be combining the public's yearning for saints with its love of a horse race. Lord Reith would cry from his spinning grave, what is wrong with the saints (and horse races) you have already? The

Alfred The answer is that they cannot be granted a heckle-free interview on the Today programme, that modern ceremony of beatification. Either way it would surely make more sense to use MORI or Gallup. Which brings me to Evita Peron. Nobody ever heckled her on the

radio. She was the secular saint of the century, now reincarnated by the anti-saint. Madonna. The original stage portrayal by Elaine Paige was cynical, kitsch and great fun. The film version is reportedly brilliant. The theme of both is that since all power is corrupt and founded on cosmetic appeal, why not do it in style? Make the politician a saint and have done with subterfuge.

enon testified to the charisma of this woman. She died of vaginal the age of 33, or as she put it, 31. Her life story — poor

country turned mediocre actress turned fascist moll - was banal. What no dramatisation can reproduce is her manipulation of crowds, and thus her skill at collectivising human responses to her appeal.

There have been many explanations for the success of Peronism in the 1940s. It mobilised the new industrial working class (Evita's Descamisados) against landed wealth. It grew fat on the postwar boom in commodity prices. But Evita's extortion from the rich to sustain her incipient welfare state was highly personalised. It bribed her husband's trade union supporters, substituting veiled menace for tax enforcement. She personally handed out benefits to the poor each week in front of the cameras an idea John Major might consider in his hour of need.

This was politically unremarkable. What was astonishing was Evita's ability to move a mob beyond tears to a sort of mystical adoration. Her public life seems to have been conducted before a perpetual mass congregation. She was loved by the poor for her attacks on the rich. She finally renounced the cry of the crowd for



Evita the adored: "a messenger with little by way of a message"

her to become vice-president in 1951, doing so on a giant "bridge of love" next to her husband while aeroolanes wrote her name in vapour in the sky.

In her last great speech, Evita, dying of cancer, cried out over a throng estimated at a million in central Buenos Aires that she would one day return to them. She beseeched them to love Peron as she loved them. "La vida por Peron", she cried, and collapsed in pain in the arms of her presidential

This was political theatre of a high order. Pandemonium broke out across Argentina. Shrines festooned every church and Masses were sung. Miracles were duly declared. And when the dying Evita voted for her husband from her hospital bed, women knelt to kiss the urn carrying her ballot

Evita achieved the apotheosis of dying young and thus living for

she says, "but it will be quite

vice followed by soup and chat."

CHRISTMAS in the White House

is traditionally a Bing Crosby sort

of affair, but the Clintons are doing

their best to give it a twist. Guests

arriving for the round of thank-

you-for-your-support dinners this

week are asked to reach into a glass

bowl from which they pick out a

table number and place at random.

Each table is hosted by one of the

Clintons or one of the Gores. The Vice-President and his wife are re-

portedly showing an excess of affec-

Lucky dip

ever. Her body was embalmed and carted around the world (with decoy facsimiles to dely thieves). it was returned to Buenos Aires after Peron's short-lived restoration to power in 1974. It now rests in the Recoleta cemetery, where the tomb is said to be proof not just against grave robbers but against a nuclear

In his biography of Evita, Nicho-las Fraser argued that she was not a true cult. She was certainly vilified by the anti-Peronists who later put her clothes, including her underwear, on public display and portrayed her as "a whore with a whip". It was hopeless. The clothes were seized as instant relics. The sceptical writer V.S. Naipaul was mesmerised by the respect for her sanctity. "She is without dates or politics," he wrote after her death. Even her successor in Peron's affection, Isabelita, venerated her remains and brushed the hair on her cadaver.

Small wonder the film script of Evita was handled with kid gloves as it travelled the globe. Watched by a horrified Argentine nation, it made its sorry way from Ken Russell to Zeffirelli to Attenborough to Coppola to Oliver Stone. Evita's bird-like ghost took on the more substantial forms of Faye Dunaway, Meryl Streep, Liza Minnelli, Diane Keaton, Michelle Pfeiffer and finally Madonna. The last at least had the qualification of craving the part as much as had Evita herself.

As Fraser concludes, Evita has thus achieved the immortality she yearned for - "within the limits prescribed by the late 20th century". A standard jest among Washington officials is that the key to your reputation in a crisis is who gets to play you in the movie.

Evita's record was, to put it mildly, dubious. She was a messenger with little by way of a message a voice with few words. But she touched a nerve deep in a people's subconscious.

Naipaul saw her cult as rooted in Latin admiration for sexual allure combined with female submission. Her renunciation of vice-presidenferminine piety. The Juan and Evita show was "the passion play of dictatorship", arbitrary power dictatorship", arbitrary power atoned by love. Hence the Masses. the shrines and the miracles in her name, all of which continue to this

n application to canonise Evita was made to The Vatican after her death. It was made by the Argentine trade union movement and was short-lived. Evita would appear to fail on a number of counts. But modern sainthood, like that of the early Middle Ages, takes many forms. It can also involve the most improbable subjects. Secular sanctity lies not with the authority of any church. It lies in the minds of readers, viewers and listeners.

This sainthood is merely the cult of personality. Its temple is the media. I have no doubt that a reincarnated Evita would sweep the Today programme shortlist. Like Violetta in La Traviata, she would die with a quiver of love on her lips and the nation would go

As for Madonna, I have an uncomfortable feeling that her team, with a battery of telephones, could achieve victory for her too. Perhaps they should have launched the film a month ago.

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Cook and tell

STEAMED puddings are the fuel driving the Conservative campaign machine, according to Chandos Elletson, until the summer head chef at Conservative Central Office. He is in the middle of writing a book detailing the eating habits of his Tory former paymasters. Elletson, 34, is the brother of Harold Elletson, Conservative MP for Blackpool North, and ran the CCO kitchens for a year. "I call my book a cook and tell,"

Pickles: more pudding

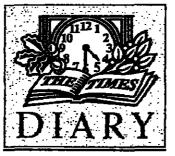
says Elletson. He reveals that when he was cooking there. Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, loved egg and chips, much against the wishes of his staff who wanted to keep him on healthy salads. When he felt like a proper plateful, Mawhinney would have to call down to the kitchens on his private line and whisper for "the usual". It would then be brought up to him to disappointed snorts

Eric Pickles, MP for Brentwood and Ongar, according to Elletson is "a man who likes his food", a fact obvious from even the most perfunctory look at his robust physique. He and Sir Graham Bright, MP for Luton South, both important Central Office figures, would order special helpings of Elletson's tremendous steamed puddings at peculiar times of day.

from his secretaries.

Douglas Hurd, says Elletson, was a quite extraordinary trencherman. He will not, however, reveal any more. "Hurd is just too good," he teases. "I am saving it for the

● Anv spare Christmas cheer



Laurie, comedian. On Thursday evening, at a party for Rowan atkinson's production company, Laurie played the keyboards in a band led by Lenny Henry. He looked as though he had just found a hole in his favourite trousers. "I've never seen Hugh looking so down "said one guest He was just down, "said one guest. He was just completely Les Miserables." His agent, clearly suffering from the same ennui, angrily declined to offer an explanation.

Night moves

LINCOLN Cathedral's loss is the village of Partney's gain this year as the Bishop of Lincoln, tired of the in-fighting among his dearis, is de-camping there for Christmas. The Rt. Rev Robert Hardy will be preshould be pushed the way of Hugh siding over midnight mass at the

village's 14th century church.

"After the Bishop announced his boycott of the cathedral," says Canon Raymond Rodger, the Bish-op's personal assistant, "he asked the rural dean if there was a vacant parish. Partney was suggested and the Bishop accepted."

The parishioners, who have not had an incumbent vicar for over a year and were contemplating cancelling the service, are now hard at their preparations, led by the unflappable Miss T.M. Maddison. Currently bowling through her eighties and a churchwarden for 12

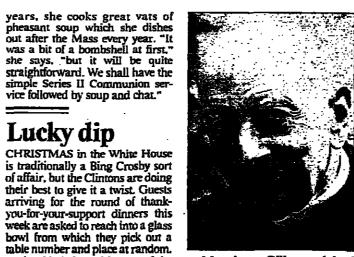


"Remember, who dares wins"

tion on the dance floor. An explanation has at last been offered for the sinister container

truck parked by the White House recently. It is the egg nog truck. For two parties only, it pumped out 40 gallons of the stuff. Age game

EARLIER this week, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother hosted her



annual dinner in the library of the Travellers Club in Pall Mall, her favourite room in London. She was wandering down the splendid main staircase when she came

upon Monsignor Gilbey, the former Catholic chaplain to Cambridge University and now a permanent resident of the club, pottering up to bed.

Gilbey, 95, has always been a huge admirer of the Queen Mother, but to his great frustration had

never met her. Recognising Gilbey, the Queen



Monsignor Gilbey and the Queen Mother: esprit d'éscalier

Mother said "Excuse me, I believe I'm a year older than you are."
"You can't be," said Gilbey, his quiet walk disturbed. There is only one woman a year

older than me, and that's the Queen Mother." And on he carried to his room.

The Queen Mother paused for a moment, then ambled off as well. She has booked the room again for



NO ELGIN, NO MARBLES

A civilised case for keeping the glory of the British Museum



A contrast must strike anyone who looks at the frieze of sculptures from the Parthenon and who contemplates the political battle which has raged around them in recent years. Phidias's craftsmen made marble ripple like waves: the procession which they depict is fluid, thrilling and intriguing. The war of words over the marbles' location is precisely the opposite: static and predictable exchanges take place with fixed weaponry.

An undaunted Greek Government has launched the latest of many diplomatic and public relations campaigns to remove the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum and restore them to Athens. To judge by the media headlines, the case for moving the marbles is gaining ground. The Government in Athens is preparing a contract to build a new museum to house the frieze. Members of the European Parliament have signed a petition for restitution. A fashion for sending objects of importance "back home" is taking hold. America has sent Mycenean gold back to Greece; France is considering giving the Hottentot Venus back to South Africa. Many now see Lord Elgin as a thief, albeit of fine pedigree, and the sculptures as stolen goods that should be given back to their rightful Greek owners.

egg donor

en en en such

This tide of opinion has not yet, however, become a tide of events. Although the Greek Government has hinted at legal action before the European courts, no move has been made. The European Union has no authority over the marbles; neither the International Court of Justice nor the European Court of Human Rights has any better locus. Attempts in the 1970s and 1980s to agree universal restitution guidelines have all failed. The planned museum remains a speculative gamble and may come to be one of the most expensive pieces of architectural blackmail ever constructed. Aside from the museum, the Greek case has barely altered for the past 25 years. The late Melina Mercouri was an advocate with flair, but with no new themes.

The case for the return of the marbles. remains essentially that the Parthenon is a complete plaster reconstruction of the frieze building of unique significance to Greek national culture. This argument deserves tougher scrutiny than it usually receives. The Parthenon was the symbol of one Both places are unburdened by ownership frequently very unpopular Greek city whose legacy of art, thought and democracy has only recently been honoured close to home. The disputed works were one small part of the Parthenon, almost invisible to the building's original users and neglected by their writers. "No Elgin, No Marbles" is a saving that does not just apply to the rescue of the works from decay, bombing and pollution: it is when sited in London and inspiring some of the greatest romantic and classical artists in Europe, that the marbles have become themselves.

Ideas and images do shape national cultures; but they are also exchanged between them with extraordinary ease. The work of ancient Greeks moulded modern Europe's ideas of itself. After James Stuart and Nicholas Revett anchored in an obscure

corner of the Ottoman empire in 1751, their sketches of Athenian ruins and remains began a fashion for all things Greek which flowered for more than a century and remains alive to this day.

When they went on show in London in 1807, the Elgin Marbles took firm root in British life. William Hazlitt, one of the first men gripped by the thrill of gazing on matchless carving, said that the procession of horses, chariots, warriors, bulls, priests and children "do not seem to be the outer surface of a hard and immovable block of marble, but to be actuated by an internal machinery, and composed of the same soft and flexible materials as the human body". The marbles inspired Keats, Hardy, Haydon and many others; the relationship between marbles and museum fascinated Forster, Virginia Woolf and Louis Mac-Neice. Politicians and philosophers came also under the spell.

After support for Greek resistance to Ottoman rule came into fashion, enthusiasm for a long-neglected culture passed back to Greek nationalists. But the Parthenon's importance emerged from the research of British and German scholars. Accusations of cultural imperialism, sometime made by Greeks complaining of Elgin's removal of the marbles to London, are a dangerous weapon in a Europe where so much intellectual traffic has travelled in so many directions over so many centuries.

Englishmen even taught Greeks to resent Lord Elgin. The most eloquent case for the marbles' return came from an Englishman resident in America. Until the rebirth of modern Greece after the Second World War, the dispute over the marbles was conducted entirely by Britons. Postwar Greek complaints about the removal of artefects can be found, but they include hardly a mention of

Today roughly 40 per cent of the marbles remain in Athens, 60 per cent in London; other fragments reside in Palermo, Rome, Copenhagen, Paris and Heidelberg. A already exists in Basle, and the British Museum is negotiating to help the construction of another in Nashville, Tennessee. arguments over a treasure which belongs to the world; but their desire to show as much of Phidias's work as they can suggests a way out for everyone.

The British Museum has accumulated 150 years of experience in reproducing the frieze; before the war, the marbles were displayed alongside reproductions of the remaining segments. Could Greece not be offered that expertise to display the frieze's full sequence, using high-quality reproductions of the portions in London? Cultural nationalists would not be satisfied, but millions of tourists would see and learn much more than they can now. Moving the marbles solves nothing. Completing them, in London, Athens and imaginative places elsewhere, would be to spread the message of this miracle of man's art.

ARCANE, HE CALLS IT

The voters know a wriggling politician when they see one

Sometimes it is easy to despair of this Government. True, it has no majority: granted, it is riven by arguments over Europe. There is an unmistakable smell of defeatism in the parliamentary ranks. But so many of the Tories' problems arise not from these circumstances: they are entirely of the leadership's own making. The case of the cheating whips is a prime example of selfinflicted damage made worse by the Prime Minister's misjudged response yesterday.

Behind the adversarial public face of Parliament lies an intricate network of cooperation between opposing parties. "The usual channels" are used to negotiate anything from the timetabling of a Bill, the membership of committees to future business in the House - plus, of course, the pairing of absent MPs.

Crucially, these back-office workings of Parliament depend upon trust. That trust was betrayed on Monday, when a Tory pairing whip. Derek Conway, was caught double dealing in an attempt to fix a vote. As it happened, the Government would have won the vote anyway: but the whip did not know that the Unionists were behind him when he did his nefarious work. Had they gone the other way, the Government would

have won the vote only thanks to his deeds. Mr Conway's action itself was wrong and misconceived. But the reaction to it by senior ministers has made a bad situation so much worse, Yesterday the Prime Minister, no less, dismissed the crime as "an arcane dispute" and added: "quite what misunderstandings occurred here I don't know." He

has had four days to find out. His deputy, Michael Heseltine, was just as dismissive, and equally slippery, when the affair was first exposed. He claimed to know nothing about what went on in the Whips' Office - which is odd enough for a. even odder for the man put up by the party expressly to field questions about what went on in the Whips' Office.

Norman Tebbit, never a politician to hold back when ruthless measures needed to be taken, has also described Mr Conway's action as "cheating". He claims to have talked to three former Conservative Chief Whips, all of whom agreed with him. This is no way," he said, "for the Tories to win an

election." He is absolutely right. What Messrs Major and Heseltine seem not to realise is that most members of the public do not approve of cheating. When a cheater is caught, they expect at least contrition, if not a straightforward apology. Even the most amoral of politicians could surely see that it is in the Conservatives' interests not to attempt to minimise what everybody else recognises as an offence. They should have come clean, expressed embarrassment that it had ever happened and promised to ensure that it would not

happen again. Now that the ruse has been exposed, it could not be repeated anyway. Why not make a virtue of having clamped down on sharp practices? Why not apologise for overzealotry and make a token sacrifice in the Whips' Office? Instead the Prime Minister has tried to pretend that nothing bad happened in the first place, and has insulted the intelligence of voters by claiming that it was too arcane for them to

understand. If Mr Major wonders why he and his party are unpopular, he should stop looking at the favourable economic statistics and begin to examine the aura that surrounds his administration. Sleaze is followed by dissembling, made worse by dodgy dealing and compounded throughout by an inability to apologise. Could that possibly explain the parliamentarian of 30 years' experience, but Tories' lamentable performance in the polls?

From Colonel W. A. Allen,

It must now be beyond doubt that

We have therefore only two alternatives: to accept the progressive loss of political and economic sovereignty which continued membership of the EU on present terms will bring, or seek to renegotiate a purely trading relationship with the Union, similar to

The choice is urgent. As EMU is introduced, as majority voting is inevitably extended and as membership of the Union widens, our negotiating position will become progressively weaker.

The solution is in Mr Major's hands. Rather than hanging on until May in the hope that something will turn up, he should call a general election early in the new year seeking a mandate to renegotiate our membership as a purely trading partner, cooperating in other joint ventures if and when it is in our mutual interests.

This would be in the nation's interest, in Europe's interest and in his party's interest. It would accord closely with the wishes of a clear majority of the British electorate, it would avoid our acting as a continuing obstacle to what the rest of Europe appears to want, and it is the only possible way in which his party could win the next

Yours faithfully, ANTHONY ALLEN, Pool House, Long Street. Great Ellingham, Norfolk.

From Mr John Redwood, MP for Wokingham (Conservative)

eral of the British Bankers' Association and others (December 16) is right that it is in Britain's interests that any new European currency should be legal. The problem with the euro is that it is a different currency from the ecu set out in the treaty.

treaty amendment to legalise the euro. The letter you published is quite wrong to say the other member states can press on with the euro without our votes to try to legalise it.

already one court case under way not insist on legalising the euro prop-

Yours faithfully, JOHN REDWOOD, House of Commons.

The Times way.		
•	1966	1996
Austria Sch	72.2	17.59
Belgium Fr	139.2	51.73
Canada \$	3,09	2.20
France Fr	13.7	8.44
Germany Dm	11.2	2.52
Hong Kong \$	16.l	12.46
Japan Yen	1012.2	186.80
Norway Kr	20.0	10.50
Sweden Kr	14.4	11.14
Switzerland Fr	12.1	2.14
USA\$	2.79	1.62

sterling, why should we wish to retain the pound, and why should we entrust our governments with control of the economy?

Yours faithfully. ADRIENNE MAY. 2 Rurton Close.

"dog-tags" (report, December 16)? As late as our war in 1939-45, we

wore "identity discs". Yours faithfully. J. D. FAGE, Hafod Awel. Pennal, Machynlleth. Powys.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London El 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Call for clarity on progress to EMU

Royal Tank Regiment (reta)

Sir. Despite Mr Major's denials, there is now every indication that the political momentum behind EMU in the rest of Europe is so great that it will take place whether it makes economic sense or not.

the type of Europe which Mr Major says he wants is simply unanainable. Every pronouncement by any other European leader shows a clear determination to achieve a form of union going far beyond anything which would be acceptable to the vast majority of the British people.

that we thought we were voting for in

Sir, The letter from the Director Gen-

Britain should say that it will take a

Recital 8 of the regulation helps undermine the legal status of the euro. It points out that an EC regulation cannot guarantee the legality of the euro outside the 15 member states. There is questioning the euro. There could be many more in the financial markets of New York and Tokyo if Britain does

erly. We have a veto. We owe it to business to use it to insist on a legal single currency and to demand European policies that work in the interests of British business. Britain at the moment has a bad deal in Europe. We need to negotiate a better one. When you have a veto there is no need to appease policies which will not work.

December 20.

From Miss Adrienne May

Sir. Browsing in Pears Cyclopaedia 1966/67 I find the following exchange rates, dated March 12, 1966. I also cite the tourist rates ("Bank sells") given in

In view of this slide in the value of

North Walsham, Norfolk. December 17.

A soldier's identity

From Professor J. D. Fage

Sir, What is all this nonsense about the bodies of British soldiers killed in France in 1917 being found wearing

December 16.

Weekend Money letters, page 28

Critical look at the Prince of Wales's approach to Islam

From Dr Ali Wassil

morality, BSE ...

Sir. The Prince of Wales has boldly tackled a battery of mighty topics (report and article, "Islamic spirituality and the decline of the West". December 14): God, Islam, the Koran, incarnation, the cosmos, scientific arrogance and tyranny, modern materialism, our environment, ethics and

A Muslim blessed with many years of Christian, Western and scientific education, enjoying American and British paradise. I know many here will "not buy" the Prince's opinions on such controversial and touchy issues. They will ask: If Islamic society is so good in confronting modern evils, why do so many from Muslim nations desperately escape to USA and Europe? Why so much misery, inequality, injustice, corruption and warfare among Muslims?

Some, too, will question the future occupant of Buckingham Palace and owner of a vast material empire attacking "materialism". Didn't Jesus tell the rich man to first give away all his money before he can find spiritual-

But I hope none of this will detract from the important work of the Prince in promoting respect and understanding between the peoples of the West and Islam. He is doing in Britain what the Muslim Emperor Akbar and the Buddhist Emperor Asoka did in India. I trust women and men of goodwill in West and East will wish him great success, insha'Allah!

Peace be with you, ALI WASSIL. 109 Guilford Street, WC1. December 14.

From Dr Tony Sargent

Sir, During the course of 1994 three Iranian Christians - Bishop Haik Hovsepian-Mehr, Pastor Mehdi Dibaj (an evangelical scholar and theologian who had been imprisoned for nine years) and the Reverend Tateos Michaelian, Presbyterian leader of the Protestant Churches in Iran were all slain by the Islamic authori-

In September this year the body of Pastor Mohammed Yusefi, a 35-yearold minister, was found hanging from a tree in a forest near his home in Gorga. He was the seventh Iranian our heads".

Arabia has been forced underground; and the situation in Iran is mirrored in Sudan and to a lesser extent in Pakistan and Kuwait. Yet the liberty that Muslims rightfully have to practise and proclaim their faith in the West is beyond dispute.

The Prince's preferred title in a fu-ture role is "Defender of Faith". Many Christians who respect aspects of Islamic culture and the Holy Koran would welcome a royal voice to speak

Sincerely.
TONY SARGENT. Chapel Road. Worthing, West Sussex.

Sir, I am always pleased when emin-

timistic picture that Prince Charles paints of Islam. Last week I was with a group of Sudanese Christians in northern Uganda. In one of the refugee camps, about a month previously, Muslims had forced them to leave their houses at gunpoint, after which they set fire to the houses and to the bible school where they were studying. Most of them have now found temporary sanctuary in the nearest town, but the threats have followed them, causing fear amongst the students

This may explain why my Iranian

Christian to gain a martyr's crown since the revolution of 1979. colleagues tell me that they were astonished to read of Prince Charles's uncritical comments about the Islamic "integrated spiritual view of the world". And even more by his assertion that we should engage in an "exchange of teachers" for we "need to be taught by Islamic teachers how to learn with our hearts as much as with

Religious teaching other than Islam is prohibited in many Muslim coun-tries. The Christian Church in Saudi

out now against persecution, the be-heading of apostates and interpreta-tions of the Koran which permit dis-membering the hands of thieves and the public flogging of adulterers.

The Worthing Tabernacle, December 16.

From the Reverend Don Brewin

ent seekers after truth encourage us to recognise it, wherever it exists. As Prince Charles points out, Christianity and Islam agree in challenging the materialistic spirit of our age.

But there is another side to the op-

students and their commitment to the gospel of peace remain undiminished. Maybe those Muslims who take seriously the Koranic teaching about God as the "all-merciful and compassionate" would like to join in condemning this overt act of intimidation? Then we might be persuaded that the call to mutual understanding comes genuinely from both sides.

depth of the Christian faith of these

Yours faithfully. DON BREWIN (National Director), SOMA (Sharing of Ministries Abroad). Wickham Cottage, Gaddesden Turn, Billington, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. December 17.

From Mr Ahmad Bullock

Sir. As a Muslim convert since 1942. with considerable experience of the immigrant community in this country and of Muslims overseas, I must take issue with the Prince of Wales's contention that Islam has any spiritual contribution whatever to make that will "arrest the decline of the West". I believe that the Prince and his ad-

visers are entirely wrong. Take for example the treatment of Muslim women by Muslim men in a matrimonial context - an area in which His Royal Highness can scarcely be said to have an outstanding record. The revelations in your Magazine of December 7, "Till death do us part", of wife abuse in Pakistan apply well beyond that country. They are appalling, they are entirely true, and such behaviour is distributed throughout the social classes equally.

Women are third-class citizens throughout the Muslim world. Yours faithfully, AHMAD BULLOCK

December 15. From Mr Kenneth C. Watson

62 Kelburne Road, Oxford.

Sir. So Prince Charles urges us to learn from Islam. Would HRH like to tell us what we

should learn from the fatwa against

Salman Rushdie? Yours faithfully, . C. WATSON, 9 High Street, Lode, Cambridge.

Wise after the event

A rigged vote

From Lord Bridge of Harwich

Sir. Rigging the vote (report and leading article, December 18) is the ultimate negation of democratic values. It is something we expect to happen under fascist dictatorships and in bana-

na republics. Hitherto I think most people believed it just could not happen in our mature democracy at Westminster. But what now? If the Government Whips' Office organised double pairings in the House of Commons on Monday, as reported, this was fla-

grant vote-rigging. It was depressing to watch the eva-sions by members of the Government, including the Deputy Prime Minister, who were questioned about the matter on television last night. Mr Heseltine seemed to imply that, if the vote had

and their families. In spite of this, the

standard in political morality. Yours faithfully,

BRIDGE OF HARWICH (Crossbencher). House of Lords.

counting double, Labour's lead in the opinion polls does not look so secure.

S. HUGH MAHONEY, 23 Guilford Court, Lord Warden Avenue, Walmer, Kent.

December 18.

Aids prevention

From the Chief Executive of Aids Care Education and Training

Sir, Professor Michael Adler (letter, December 11) rightly reminds us of the shortsightedness of Britain's limited commitment to fighting the global spread of Aids. It is clear that 90 per cent of the Aids problem exists in developing nations — those least able to help themselves. Already there is a massive discrepancy between infection and death in the West (ten or more years) and in developing nations

(about one year). This organisation, with many others, has been providing sexual health education programmes in Uganda since 1990. Reports at this year's World Aids Conference showed that rates of HIV infection in some urban areas of that country, for the very first time, were stabilising and even falling. The main reason given was the success of the prevention campaigns. Prevention is still the only real wea-

Hong Kong treaties

From Dr Alan Lawrance

extending inland from Kowloon were added on the basis of a 99-year lease.

did so presumably because she recognised that the treaties were, as the Chinese maintained, "unequal", ie, they had been imposed by a superior British force. Yours faithfully,

ALAN LAWRANCE, University of Hertfordshire, Wall Hall Campus. Aldenham, Watford, Herfordshire. December 17.

been distorted by "byzantine" procedures in the Whips' Office, this was of no consequence, since the Government would have won even without

the double pairings. This strikes me as setting a new low

December 18.

From Mr S. Hugh Mahoney Sir. With Conservative votes now

Yours faithfully.

pon we have against Aids. Those who believe that the scale of what is happening across the globe will not have an impact on our shores and affect the wealth of our nation should think again. Many British businesses owe much of their wealth to the large-scale employment of cheap workers in developing coun-

profits - and are already setting money aside for HIV prevention. It is not only morally right to consider extending our assistance to such Aids-affected nations but it will become increasingly cost-effective to do

tries. Some Western companies have

already become aware of the devasta-

tion Aids is likely to wreak on their

foreign labour force - and on future

Yours sincerely, PAT MACAULAY, Chief Executive, ACET (Aids Care Education and Training). PO Box 3693. London SW15 2BQ.

Sir. As an Archers fan I was startled

by Matthew Parris's assertion that

you'd have to have a rather sad life to

wish to employ your spare time keep-

ing up with Ambridge" (article, Dec-

On Tuesday and Thursday after-

noons both of us spend our time in the

Commons sitting through live perfor-

mances of that other, but inferior, nat-

ional soap opera. Prime Minister's

telephone numbers.

Ouestions, Is that not even sadder?

December 11.

ember lő).

NIGEL NELSON

One Canada Square,

Canary Wharf, El4.

(Political Editor).

The People,

December 17.

From Mr Nigel Nelson

Soap and flannel

Sir, Sir Frederic Bennett (letter, December 17) has oversimplified the legal position in contrasting Hong Kong with Gibraltar. In 1842 by the Treaty of Nanking China ceded the island of Hong Kong in perpetuity. Similarly, in 1860 by the Convention of Peking Britain received a piece of the mainland just across from Hong Kong. This is now downtown Kowloon. It was in 1898 that the New Territories

Mrs Thatcher did not have to give up the island and south Kowloon. She

> With the postal delays that often occur at this time of year, it is useful, where possible, for letters to be faxed to 0171-782 5046. Please give contact

From the Reverend Ivor E. L. Scott-Oldfield Sir, Before there is a rush to nominate

any present-day "three wise men" (pace Alistair Dickson's entertaining letter on December 17) it might be wiser for all concerned to reflect on the

> mistakes of their doubtless wellmeaning predecessors, and the dire consequences of those errors. They arrived approximately two years too late, going in the first instance to the wrong place - Jerusalem and bringing inappropriate, though mystically correct, gifts to a child. They talked to quite the wrong, and worst person possible - Herod -

and were indirectly responsible for a savage bout of infanticide. Yours faithfully, IVOR E. L. SCOTT-OLDFIELD, He Prior Bolton Street,

Canonbury, N1. December 17.

From Mrs Rosemary Callender Sir, I would happily invite Yehudi Menuhin, Richard Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh, and David Attenborough as proof that wisdom, in many guises, is available and appreciated

Penn Grove Lodge, 98 Penn Grove Road, Hereford. December 19.

ROSEMARY A. CALLENDER.

today.

Yours faithfully,

From Mrs Shirley Hughes Sir, I am not sure whether my three personal wise men — George Steiner, Saul Bellow and Richard Dawkins would particularly wish to be present

at the birth of Jesus. Yours faithfully, SHIRLEY HUGHES. 4 Cedars Road, SWL3.

December 17.

Moral education

From Mr Alan Millard Sir, In the light of the moral debate, should day schools be opening on Sundays (report, December 16), or should Sunday schools be opening on weekdays?

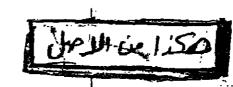
Yours sincerely, ALAN MILLARD, 8 Medina Court, Marine Parade West, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hampshire.

The wrong signals? From Mr David Elias

Sir. You report (December 17) that a stage version of Wallace and Gromit is to tour Britain, "featuring actors in costumes".

Are there any plays that don't? Yours faithfully. DAVID ELIAS.

13 Clumber Crescent North, The Park, Nortingham. December 17.





COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE December 20: The Duke of York this morning visited the Headquarters of the Philippines Navy, Manila.

His Royal Highness later visited the Headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and was received by the Secretary of National Defence (Senor Renato De Villa).

The Duke of York this evening departed the Philipnines for London. ST JAMES'S PALACE December 20: The Prince of

Wales. Patron, this afternoon visited the Sue Ryder Home at Leckhampton Court, Cheltenham.

His Royal Highness, Pa-tron, afterwards visited Cotswold Care Hospice, Minchinhampton. YORK HOUSE

December 20: The Duke of Kent, Chancellor, the University of Surrey, this afternoon presided at a Conferment of Degrees Ceremony, at Guildford Cathedrai, Guildford, Surrey.

Weekend birthdays





Jane Fonda, the actress, is 59 today, Noel Edmonds, the broadcaster, will be 48 tomorrow

TODAY: Mr F.G. Berkeley. former Chief Taxing Master of the Supreme Court, 77; Air Commandant Dame Jean Bromet, former director, WRAF, 84; Mr B.E.S. Collins, former chairman. Nabisco Group, 73; Miss Chris Evert, tennis player. 42: Mr Bertrand Gachot, racing driver. 34; the Earl of Haddington, 55; Sir James Hill, MP, 70; Mr Walter Hogbin, former chair-man, Taylor Woodrow International, 59; Mr G.P. Hughes, former tennis player, 94; Mr Peter Johnson, Headmaster, Wrekin College, 49; Sir Frederick Lawton, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 85; Mr Geoff Lewis, racehorse trainer, 61: Mr W.M.M. Milligan, former Principal, Wolsey Hall, Oxford, 89; Sir John Nabarro, consultant physician, 81; Mr Steve Perryman, former footballer, 45; Mr Anthony Powell, CH, author, 91; Sir John Quinton, former non-executive chairman. George

Wimpey, 67: Flight Lieutenant W. Reid, VC, agricultural con-

sultant, 75; Brigadier V.M.

Rooke, former director, Army

Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor, .52; Mr Peter Tinniswood, author, 60; Mr Cyril Townsend, MP, 59; Dr Kurt Waldheim, former President of Austria, 78: Dr Alan Williams, MP. 51; Mr Carl Wilson, singer. 50; Professor Robert Worcester, chairman, MORI, 63.

TOMORROW: Air Chief Marshal Sir John Aiken, 75; Mr James Burke, broadcaster, 60; Mr Robin Corbett, MP. 63; Viscount Davidson, 68; Miss E M Diggory, Head Mistress, Manchester High School for Girls, 51; Mr Geoffrey Fitchew, chairman, Building Societies Commission, 57; Mr Maurice Gibb and Mr Robin Gibb. singers, 47; Miss Patricia Hayes, actress, 87; Mrs Karin Jonzen, sculptor, 82: Dr Judith McClure, Headmistress. St George's School for Girls. Edinburgh, 70; Sir Trefor Morris, former HM Chief inspector of Constabu-lary, 62; Mr Chris Old, cricketer, 48; the Rev Lord Sandford, 76; Mr M Sheldrick, Governor, Holloway prison, 46; Lord Stott, 87; the Duke of Westminster, 45: Mi ter Spanghero, former rugby whitmore, playwright, 57; Sir player, 53; Mr Greville Peregrine Worsthorne, jour-

Church services tomorrow

Fourth Sunday in Advent ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC: 11 MP. The Angel Gabriel (Carol). The Dean; 3.15 Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch, Hall blessed Virgin Mery (Italian Carol), Orbis Factor (kyrie), Mass of the Quiet Hour (Oldroyd), Es ist ein Ros Fraetorius; 3.30 Service of Nine Lessons &

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Choral Euch. M. Brevis/Ave marts stella (Palestrina), Gabriel's Message (Petman), Canon D Lee: 4 Choral E, Responses (Sanders), Stanford in A, Ave marts stella (Monteverdi), Canon R Bollard.

BolackBurn CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 Chord M, Christopher's Carol (Bertalot), Caton A Hindley, 10.30 Euch, Mass for five voices (Bytd), Caton J Hall: 4 Choral E, Angelus ad Virginem (Catter), The Provost,
BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8, 11 H Euch, Plainsong,
Canon E John: 3.30 E, Walmisley in D minor.
Responses (Moriey). Christmas Oratorio part 1
(Bach); 6.15 Advent Carol Service in St Mary's
Church.

Church.

SRISTOL CATHEDRAL, College Green: 7.40 M; 8
HC: 10 Choral Euch, Advent Antiphont, Mass for
four voices (Byrd), Prepare thyself Zion (Bach),
Canon Alastair Redferm: 3.30 Choral E. Advent
Prose, Responses (Clucas), Dyson in D. Rotate
Caeli (Byrd), Canon P Johnson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.30 M; II S
Euch, Missa S Joannis de Deo (Haydn), O
Emmanuel (Stratagiert, Rev Dr M J Chandler.
3.15 E, Responses (Piccolo), O Emmanuel, Tone il
solerm and Wood in B flat, This is the record of
John (Gibbons); 6.30 Compline, Rev R H C
Symon.

John (Glbbons); 6.30 Compline, Rev R H C Symon.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 10.30 S Euch, Jackson in G. I sing of a malden (Berkeley). Canon C Hill: 3.30 Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols.

CHELMSPORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP. 8 HC: 9.30 Euch, Rev! Jones: 11.15 S Euch, Salve Regina (Palansong). Agnus Del, Canon B Thompson: 6 Chora! E. Responses (Tallis). O Rex Gentium, Sumsion in G. Ave Maria (Faure), Rev J Jones.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 Litany: 8 HC: 10 Chora! E. Mass for four voices, (Byrd), Rejoice in the Lord (Anon). Ecce vingo concipier (Issaic), Rev T Barker; 1.30 Chora! M. Responses (Symd), Dyson in F. This is the record of John (Clbbons), The Dean: 3.30 Chora! E & Baptism, Responses (Smith), Jonus Peregrinus, fiail Queen of Heaven (Burgon), Rt Rev M Maddocks; 11 S Euch, Missa Bervis (Palestrina), There is no rose (Joubern), Canon G Hall; 5 E: 6 Carol Service.

CHERIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL Ordord: 8 HC: 10 M. Benedicide (Sumsion in G., Canon Ward: 11.15 S Euch, Missa venatorum (Lassus), O Sacrum convivium (Messaien), Canon of John (Glbbons).

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP. 8 C. 10.30 Puch, Missa Deus Gentro Alme, Leddington

(Gibbons).
COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP: 8 C: 10.30

Meeless for Trebles, and the glory of the Lord (Handel).

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8, 11.15 HC, Sumsion in F. Adoro te devote (Lloyd), Canon R Copplin: 10 M. Benedictie and Benedicties in E flat and B flat (Stanford), Rejolce in the Lord alway, Canon S Pediey; 3.30 EP, O Emmanuel: 4 Lighting of Christmus Tree and Blessing of Crib; 7 Festival of Mine Lessons and Carols.

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8, 15 HC, The Dean; 10.30 S Euch. Mass in D (Dvorakl, Ave Maris Stella (Grieg), Revd J McParlane; 3.45 E. Preces (Tomkins), Purcell in G minor, Annunciation according to Si Like (Schutz).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 S Euch. Ave Maria (Arcadeir), Darke in E. Panis angelicus (Salni Saens), Canon Ison; 11.15 M, Responses (Ferial), Sumsion in B flat, Chant A, Rejolce in the Lord (anon). The Treasurer: 3 E, Responses (Ferial), Sumsion in B flat, Chant A, Rejolce in the Lord (Handel), The Priest Vicar.

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 S Euch (ASB), Darke in E, Rejolce in the Lord (Anon), Rt Rev J Baker; 11.15 M, Responses (Smith), Benedicite in B flat (Sumsion), Rejoke in the Lord (Purcell), The Sub-Dean; 6.30 E, Noble in B minor. This is the record of John (Gibbons), Canon Dr M Palmer.

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 M; 10.30 Euch, Messe Solennelle (Langlais), O magnum mysterium (Poulenc), The Treasurer; 4 Carol Service, The Provost. Service, The Provost.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Missa O quam gloriosum (Victoria), Hymne a la Vierge (Villette), Hall blessed Virgin Mary (arr. Wood), Cathedral Chamber Choir, The Dean; 3.30 E. Responses (Rose), Wood in E flat N 2, Ave Maria (Mendelssohn).
LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L: 8, 12 HC; 9.30 S
Euch, Kyrle, Sanctus & Benedictus (Durufle).
Missa in simplicitate (Langias), The Dean: 11.15
M, Benedictie in B Hat (Sumsion), Responses
(Ayleward): 2 Rotary Carol Service: 3.45 E.
Responses (Smith), Tone II and Stanford in G.
Tonis hous (Corecti).
LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 MP & HC: 10.30
Euch, Canon M Boyling: 3 The Holly Bough Carol
Service: 4 HC.

MANUSCREETED CATHEDRAL: 8 MP & HC: 10.30
Euch, Canon M Boyling: 3 The Holly Bough Carol
Service: 4 HC.

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL 8.45 MP; 9 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Darke in F. Missa C Barker Bennett; 7 Messiah. NEWCASTLE CATHEORAL: 7,30 M; 8 HC, Canon gentie far. A Carter), Mr D Harte, 6 Choral E. (
sing of a malden (Berkeley), Responses
(Ayleward), Stanford in G, There is no rose ()
Joubert).

NEWPORT CATHEDRAL: 10,30 S Euch, Missa O

magnum mysterium "/l_toria), Prepare ye the way of the Lord (Wisci, 6.30 Choral E. Purcell in G minor. Angelus ad virginem [D Willoocks], NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP, 8 HC, 10.30 S Euch, Missa ad Pracsepe (Malcolm), Short Service (Ayleward), Totus Guss (Goreck), The Archicaent of Norwich; 3.30 EP. 6 Christmas Procession with

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL 9.30 M. Short Servic (Batten); 10.30 Euch, Mass for three voices (Byrd), Mrs B Howitz 3.30 E, Dyson in F, Mary's Magnificat (Carten).

Magnificat (Curter).

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Parish Communion, Mass of St Thomas (Thome), Ave Maria (Arcadeit), Rev M. Macvicar; 11 S Euch. Hymn to the Mother of God (Tavener), Missa de angelis (Palissong), Totus Turs (Gorect), Rev M. Macvicar; 6.30 Festival of Lessons and Carols.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch. Canon P Marshall: 9.30 Euch. Darie in E. Ave Maria (Parsons). Bishop of Knaresborough; 11.30 M. Purcell in B faz. Make a joytial noise unto the Lord (Mathias), A Hymn to the Virgin (Britten); 12.30 Euch. Dean L. Weatherhead; 4.30 E; 5.30 Nine Lessons & Carols.

L Weatherhead; 4.30° E; 5.30° Nine Lessons & Carols.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 M. Responses (Sanders), Dyson in F. The Angel Gabriel (Petiman); 10.30° S Euch. The Angel Gabriel (Petiman), Canon R Lea; 3,15 E. The Angel Gabriel (Petiman), Stanford in B flat. And I saw a new heaven (Bainton), Amen (Byrd), SallsBury CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon I Davies: 10° Euch. Advent Rose, Coll Reg. (Howells), Tantum ergo sacramentum (Durufiel), Canon I Davies: 11° 30 M. Mrs M Downling; 3° E. Responses (Reading), St Maric's Service (Near).

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10° MP; 10.30° S Euch. (1662) and Preparation of Crib, The Provost; 6.30° E. The Venerable's Lowe.

SOUTHWELL MINISTER: 7.30° M; Blessed Virgin Mary (art Wood), Responses (Plainsong; 8° HC; 9.30° C & Nativity Play: 11° S Euch, Short Service (Batten), A Carol for Mary. The Chancellor; 3.15° E. Antiphon O Rez gendum, Sumsion in A. I look from afar (Piccs)(6).

TRUBO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9° M; 10° S Euch. Riessed are the pure in heart (Davies). Messe

from afar (Ficcolo).

TRUBO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9 M: 10 S Euch, Biessed are the pure in heart (Davies), Messe Solennelle (Vierne). The Librarian; 6 E. Responses (Sanders), Walmisley in D minor, This have I done for my true love (Hoist). The Curane.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.15 C. Angelus and Virginem (14th Century), Canon D Baxter; 1: S Euch, Ireland in C. Jackson in G. One morning very early (Baxter). Canon I Knox; 4 Service of Nine Lessons & Carols.

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 2 HC: 9.45 S Ench. Jackson WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 S Ench, Jackson in G. The Angel Gabriel (Trad Basque), Rev G Farran; 11.30 M, Benedicite (William Harris), Stanford in A. Rejoloc the Lord is King (Archer); 3 E. The Second Service/This is the record of John (Gibbons), Preb D Goodman.

Stanford in A. Rejoice the Lord is King (Archer); 3
E. The Second Service/This is the record of John
(Gibbons), Preb D Goodman.
WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M. Responses
(Neary), Senedicite in B fiat (Purcell), Ave Maria
(Parsons), Canon D Hott: 11.15 Abbey Euch,
Missa Trinitaits Sanctae (Grier), Hymn to the
Mother of God (Tavener), Hymn to the Virgin
(Britnes), Sr H Markey; 3 E, Watson in E. Tota
puichra es Maria (Bruckner), Rev V Stock.
WESTMINSTER CATHEORAL: 7, 8, 9, 12, 5.30, 7
M; 10 MP; 10.30 SM, Missa Ave Maria (Magnificat
primi toni (Palestrina), Ave Maria (Farsons)
floccaia, Fugue & Hymne Ave maris stella
(Peters); 3.30 V&B, Magnificat secundi toni
Małcolimi, Caite tuba in Sin (Guerrero), Fugue on
the Magnificat BW 733 (Bach).
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.35 M; 10.30 S
Euch, Mass in E flar (Rheinberger), Archdeacon of
Basingstoke; 3.30 E. Responses (Lioyd), Dyson in
F. A hymn to the Virgin (Britten), Master Tallis's
Testament (Howells), Rev R Lindley.
WORCESTER CATHEDRAL: 9.30 Family Euch,
Canon D Thomas; 11 S Euch, Missa O Quem
Gloriosum (Victoria), A tender Shoot
(Goldschmidt), Ave Maria (Parsons), Rev Dr M
Dorsett: 4 Carol Service; 6.30 E, Archdeacon of
Worcester.

Dorsett: 4 Carol Service; 6.30 E. Archdeacon of Worceser.

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch W/Baptism & Confirmation, Stanford in B fial. The Most Rev Dr D Hope; 11.30 M, Responses (Reading), Purcell in B fiant 4 E. Stanford in A. Vox dicentis (Naylor), Canon Prof E Norman.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Choral M, Responses (Tomkins), This is the record of John (Gibbons), Rev R H Grifflins; 3.30 EP.

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 4.30 Cymun Bendigald, Pregethwr: Y Deon; 9.30 Family Service, The Minor Canon; 11.15 Choral Euch, Advent Prose (Plainsong), Sumsion in F. Ave verum corpus (Mozard, The Succentor, 4.15 EP: 6 Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols.

ST EDMINDSBURY CATHEDRAL, Bury St Edmunds: 8 HC (BCP): 10 S Euch (ASB), Sanderstead Service (How/Jackson in G; 1 sew a maiden (Petman), Rev R Davey; 11.30 Choral C (BCP), Mass Propers (Plainsong), Darke in F. Rere is no rose (Popplewell). The Precentor; 3.30 E. (BCP) with Hymns.

Frazer, ST MARYS CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 10.30 Euch, Missa Sancti Johannes de Deo (Haydn), Canon J Millard; 3.30 EP; 7.30 Service of Nine Lessons & Carols. Lessons & Carols.
ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC: 8.45 M:
Addibution: 3.15 E. Jackson in G. Responses
Byrdi, Ave Maria (Bruckner), Rev Preb K Toovey:
1.30 Organ Recital. La Nativite du Setonem. RUSSIAN OF THODOX CATHEDRAL Engismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Litungy. Klevan and traditional polyphony, Diocesan Bishop Met. Anthony.

Service (Gibbons), The Vicar.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, WI: 9 C. 11 Rev J
Cook, 6.30 Carols by Candlelight, Rev J Stott.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, WI: 11 Mass
III or 1651 (Monteverdi), Ecce concipies (Handi),
Ave Maria (Williaeri),
CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: \$ HC; 10
Callidren's Service; 11 M, Rejoice in the Lord
(Redford), Dr F Sivy; 12.15 HC, 6, Nine Lessons &
Carols.

CAROIS.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH, Curzon SI, WI:
11 Sunday School.
CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,
COVERT GARRED, WCC: 11.15 Rev S Hood, 6.30
Service, of Nine Lessons & Carois.
FARM STREET, WI: 8, 9.30, 12.30, 4.15, 6.15 LM:
11 HM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 HC (ASB), Rev J Peters, 11 Christingle Service, Revi R Thrope; 5, 7.30 Informal Service, Rev S Downham. Rev S Downham.

THE ORATORY. Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10.

11 Mars, Westron Wynde Mass (Sheppard). Canlie niba (Palestrinal, 12, 30, 4, 30, 7; 3, 30 V & B., Prope est Dominus (Repard).

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH: Iveraa Gdns, W8:11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirlan.

WESLEYS CHAPEL, City Road, 8C2: 9,45 HC; 11 MS, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SWI: 11, 6.30, ST AND ST AGNES (Lutheran). Gresham St, EC2: 11 Choral Euch, Rev-P D Schmiege. ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT. Smithfield, ECI: 9 HC: 11 Choral Euch, Missa Prudentes vigines (Lobo). The Rector, 6.30 Pestival of Nine Lessons & Carols.

LESSONS & CAROLS.

ST BRIDGES, Fleet Street, EC4: [I Choral M & Euch, Responser (Smith), Benedictic (Sumsion in D), Byrd for four voices, Jesus Carist the apple tree (Mawby), Canon J Oates: 630 Choral B, A Testival of Nine Lessons & Carols, Canon J Oates, of Nine Lessons & Carols, Canon J Oanes.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Carol Service.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND. Pont Street, SWI: 11, Rev C I MacLeod; 5 Carol Service.

ST ETHELDREDA'S. Ely Piace: 11 SM. Missa Ave Maris Stella (Victoria), Ave Maria (Busto).

ST GEORGE'S. Hanover Square, WI: 8.30 HC; 11 S Ench. Coronation Mass (Mozart, The Rector; 6 Service of Nine Lessons with Carols.

ST JAMES'S, Sussex Cardens, W2: 8 Euch; 10.30 S Euch. Missa 'Se Ia face ay Pale' (Dufsy), Vox Cagnantis (Esquivel), Rev A Meldrum; a Carol Service.

Euch, Missa Se la face ay Pale' (Dubsy), Vox Casmantis (Esquivel), Rev A Meldrum; 6 Carol Service.

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rev D Reeves, 6.30 Carol Service.

ST JOHN'S, Strationd E15: 11 HC, Theme & Variation (Andressen), Rev M Okelio: 6.30 Christmas Carol Service, Rev D Richards.

ST LURES, Chelsea, SW3: 8 HC: 10.30 MP & HC. Ave Maris (Bruckner), Rev N Roberts; 6.30 Nine Lessons & Carols, Rev J. Manzhula.

ST MARR'S, Regests Park Rd, NW1: 8 HC: 9.45 Family C; 11 S Euch & Holy Baptism, Missa Brevis' Ave Maria (Palestina), Rev T Devonshire Jones; 3.30 Christmas Carols & Lessons.

ST MARCARET'S, Westminster, SW1: 11 S Euch, Missa O quam (Vittoria), This is the record of John (Gibbons), Rev J Goodall; 6 Service of Nine Lessons & Carols.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC: 9.45 Euch, Rev W Ratchifort; 11.30 Visitors to London, Rev C Herbert: ZAS Chinese Service, Rev G Lee, 5 Choral E 6.30 ES, Rev B Schunermann.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington WS: 8, 12.30 HC: 9.45 Chiral E 6.30 ES, Rev B Schunermann.

Choral E: 6.30 ES, Rev B Schunermann.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington WS: 8, 12.30 HC: 9.30 Euch, Fr Gelliz 11.15 Choral M. The Vicar: 6.30 E, Carol Service.

ST MARY'S, Bourne Street. SW1: 9, 10, 7 LM; 11 HM, Missa sent ton! (Croce), The Bishop of Edmonton; 6 E & R.

ST MARY'S HE-VIRGIN, Primose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Parish Euch. Plainsong, There is no rose of such viruse Courbert, Ave mails stella (Grieg), Rev Lyndon van der Pump; 6 Carols by Candlelight.

Candiélight.

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, Wt. 8 HC.

Il Choral Each, Missa O Magnum Mysnerium (Victoria), Magnificat (Short Service - Gibbons), Rev R McLaren; 6.30 Mine Lessons & Carols by Candielight.

Candletight.

ST PAULS, Wilton Place, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 S Buch, Messe Basse (Pauré), Ave Maria (Hoist), I sing of a maiden (Hadley), Rev C Courtsuid.

ST PETER'S. Eaton Square, SW1: 8.15 HC; 10 Pamily Euch; 11 S Buch, Missa La la Maistre Pierre (Lassus), Rejoice in the Lord alway (Anon), Fr D B Tillyer; 6.30 Carol Service.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PÉTER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9 HC, Rev P Abrain; 11 Nine Lessons & Carols, Rev P Abrain.

CHAPEL ROYAL St. James's Palmer 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Rejoice in the Lord (Purcell), Rev JH R W Stot. CHAPEL ROYAL, Henspion Court Paisce: 8,30 HC (1662); 11 M. Sumsion in B flat, Hymn to the Virgin (Britten); 3,30 Service of Nine Lessons & Carols.

CATOIS.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley Street, WI:

8.15 HC; [1] S. Euch, Missa Papae Marcelli
(Palestrina), Ave Maria Parsonsi, Ave Maris Stella
(De Grigny), Rev T Ditchiled.

OUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11, The
Chanel Carol Service. OUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11, The Chapel Carol Service.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11:15 MP. O Emmanuel, Responses (Thalben-Ball): Sunsion in D. Waljond Davies in G. This is the record of John (Glbbons), The Master. SWI: 11 M, Behold the Bridegnoom cometh (Tallis), A spotless Rose (Howells), Rev J Gough; 12 HC. ROTAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SEID: 11 S Each (BCP), Setting (Shaw), Adam lay y bounden (Ord), Rev C French.

Marriages

Mr J.N.P. Seidler and Miss H.L Aird

Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother attended the marriage held yesterday in The Queen's Chapel, St James's Palace, of Mr Johnnie Seidler, younger son of Mr Francis Seidler, of San Francisco, and of Mrs Daphne Seidler, of Horsted Keynes, Sussex, to Miss Henrietta Aird, younger daughter of Sir Alastair and Lady Aird. of St. James's, London, The Rev William Booth and the Rev David Stonebanks

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Katia Florman, Lucca Fordham, Olivia and Rosie French, Sabrina Morse, Lara Simpkin, Conrad Nel. Hugo French and Oliver Mould Mr Philip Mould was best man.

A reception was held at St James's Palace and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr D.J. Barbour and Miss L.S.K. Stanley The marriage took place yesterday at St Matthew's, West Kensington, of Mr David Barbour, eldest son of

of Mr David Barbour, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Clive Barbour, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, to Miss Laura Stanley, younger daughter of the Hon Richard and Mrs Stanley, of Fulham, London. The Rev Huw Chiplin officiated. The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Clementine Stanley, Isabella Stanley, Arabella Stanley, Susannah Stanley, Rose Jebb, Edwin Jebb, Harry Jebb, Theo Jebb, Cameron Doig, Thomas Dryden and Hugh Stanley, Mr Jeremy Skeet was best man.

A reception was held at The Orangery, Holland Park, and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr P.C. Stewart and Miss K.A.E. Shuman The marriage took place on Thursday, December 19, at Chelsea Old Town Hall, between Mr Paul Stewart and Miss Karen Shuman.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr G.W. Gasiorowski and Miss J. Barron The engagement is announced between Gregory, son of Mr and Mrs Waclaw Gasiorowski, of Ac-ton, London, and Joanne, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Weston, of Woodbridge, Suffolk. Mr J.H. Goate

and Ms H.E. O'Niaus The engagement is announced between John Goaté, of Grosvenor Hill. London WI. and Helen, daughter of Mr and Mrs Hal O'Nians, of London

Mr P.T. Kelly. and Mrs H.J. Hyman The engagement is announced between Patrick Kelly. of Aston Rise, Henley on Thames, and Hilary Hyman, nee Scott, of Earlscliffe Court, Bowdon, Cheshire.

Dr S. Langton Hewer and Miss C. Dunning

the engagement is announced between Simon, son of Professor and Mrs Richard Langton Hewer, of Leigh Woods, Bristol, and Claire, daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Dunning, of Boscombe Manor, Bournemouth. Mr M.C. Lubienski and Miss H.M. Lisowska

and Miss H.M. Lisowska
The engagement is announced between Mark, elder son of Mr and Mrs Kazimierz Lubienski, of Osterley, Middlesex, and Hania, daughter of the late Mr Jezy Lisowski and of Mrs Zofia Lisowska, of Wimbledon.

Mr J. Picton and Miss J. Prentice

The engagement is aumounced between Jon, son of Mr Peter Picton, of Stratford on Avon and Mrs Gill Brown, of Crockerton, Wiltshire, and Jessica, youngest daughter of Mr John Prentice, of Lickfold, West Sussex and Mrs Delphine Star, of Lodsworth, West

Mr S.A. Somerville and Miss M. Long The engagement is announced between Stephen, younger son of Mr and Mrs Stuart Somerville, of Coggeshall, Essex, and Maria, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Charles Long, of Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

University news

Oxford Magdalen College The following elections have

been made: To an Honorary Fellowship from November 13, 1996: Mr Julian Barnes

To Waynflete Fellowship from November 13, 1996: Mr Antony Hichens

To Fellowship by Exam-Mr M.A. Isard, of Wolfson College, Oxford, to a Fellowship by Examination in Engi-

January I, 1997. Mr G.R. Carlyle, of St Hugh's October 1, 1997.

To a Supernumerary Non-Stipendiary Fellowship: Dr P. Raynes, FRS, from January I, 1997, until the earlier of September 30, 1999, or his ceasing to be a Visiting Professor in the Department of Engineering Science.

Manchester Metropolitan Mrs Alexandra Burslem to be Vice-Chancellor. Manchester Metropolitan University from September 1, 1997, in succession to Sir Kenneth Green who is retir-ing. Mrs Burslem is currently the university's Deputy Vice-

ematics for three years from the facing page

BMDS: 0171 680 6880 PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

i Services. 12: Mit war

Starkey, former jockey, 57; Mr nalist. 73.

Put me to the proof, says the Lord of Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in the sky and pour a blessing on you as long as there is need Mal-schi 3: 10

BIRTHS ATHERTON - On Decembe 19th, to Elaine and Dennis, daughter, Sophie Alice.

BUXTOM - On December 17th to Fiona (sée Shaw) and Edward, a son, James Nicholas Edward North CRABS - Wendy and Ian are delighted to amounce the arrival of their first child, a daughter, Georgina Lydia on December 17th.

LEGARD - On December 12th, to Lucy (née Kirkpatrick) and Edward, a daughter, Cella Mary, a sister for Oliver. LEVENTHORPE - On 18th December in Hong Kong, to Sarah (née Pakenham-Walab) and Tom, a son, Arthur Richard Digby, a brother for Rensy.

LLOYD - On 4th December, to David and Alison (née Bassett), a daughter, Alexa Lliy, a sister for Felix.

LUCIE-SMITH - On 19th December 1996, to Tina (née Metham) and Euan, a daughter, Sarha Carn, a sister for Ross Euan. NUMBY - On December 17th at The Portland Hospital, to jame and lan, a beautiful son, Thomas George.

PIREPS - On 19th December, to Felicity (née Rubinstein) and Roland, a son, Nathaniel Alexander. TATE - On December 10th, to Bosalind (née Coward) and Edward, a daughter, Miranda Nahros.

DEATHS

BASNARD - Martha (Jean), on 19th December, 39ed 63, of Basingstoke and Lymington. Wife of the inte Dick, mother to Jenniter, Michael, Hogh and Bruce. Following a life of service to others will be sadly missed by many, Feneral details and flowers or donations to Parkinsons. Disease or Bible Society of Diamond Funeral Directors, Lymington, tel: (01570)

COX - On 13th December peacefuly, Shella aged 61 years of Ashtead Much loved wife of Barry and mother of Timothy, Sally and justin. Funnyal Service has taken place. If desired domations to Royal Marsden Hospital (Smithers Ward Fund) Belmont, Surrey. de BURGH - Valentine, died Decamber 18th 1996. Funeral Service to be held at Warhlington Church, near Ensworth, 11 mm, Monday December 30th Val was known by so many and greatly missed by those of as who loved him.

ENDERBY - Colonel Samuel Enderby peacefully on Friday 20th December. Loved husband of Pam. No letters please. Private family service. HEVEY - Lea. Husband of Murial, father of Flora and Tim. Died in hospital 19th December 1996. Funeral Friday 27th December 1996. Tek (01963) 607502.

BLACK - Barry. Peacefully on December 18th aged 89. Devoted husband of the late Jean. Much loved father and grandfather of Nicola and Alastair Orr Ewing. Compation private A Service of Thanksquing will be held at 5t George's Church, Fovant, Salisbury on 18th January at 2:30 pm.

THE (01993) 607502.

BESTONE: - On December 18th at Fembury Hospital. Tunhridge Wells, Frank aged 87. Widower of loss Van den Bergh, husband of Avril, father of the late Jackie Bestie and of Tim, Nicholas, Martin, Glies and Jeremy Instone and Lucinda Houth. Pameral Service at East and Sussex Cremetorium on Thursday 2nd January at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only, details from E.R. Hickmost & Son, tak: (01892) 522462.

522462. JESSUP - Anthony, on 19th December 1996 at Cromwell Hospital, London, beloved husband of Helen, adored father of James und Helen, loving brother of Jim. Funeral private. Family flowers only, by request. Denations, if desired, to Kings College Hospital Liver Unit A memorial service will be arranged.

THE

CHRISTMAS PERIOD Deadlines & Opening Times Birth, Marriage & Death Notices. For notices to appear on Tuesday December 24th the deadline is Monday December 23rd at 12 noon. For notices to appear on Thursday December 26th and Friday December 27th the deadline is Tuesday December

24th at 12 noon. Wednesday December 25th Office Closed. Thursday December 26th Office Closed. Normal hours Friday December 27th. ± 0171 680 6830

PERSONAL COLUMN LEE - Gladys "Gypsy" died 17th Documber, peacefully, aged 83. She leaves behind her only daughter Cherle Lunghi and granddrughter Rathalie Lunghi. After the war als joined the South Rhur Group of the Control Commission, Gernany, an experience which only served to confirm her unlimited compassion. Everyone who knew her considered her "the parfect desert island partner." As pur her wishes there will be no funeral. Her sakes will be scattered in a "besutiful"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lily and Lieutemant L.F. Wheeler of the 22nd London Regiment. Peggy and Geoffrey have three children Grete (1950), Blisabeth (1821) (1953), and Michael (1957). They have five grandchildren. Peggy was rarely ill, and it was therefore the more surprising that on the 28th November, whilst resting before visiting frete for lanch in the New Forest, the should have laid a resuder than the New Forest, the should have laid a resuder than the New Forest, the should have laid a strength of the heat and the wind has manufangs. The previous day she had attended the heatmanismal Women's Child and had found and the with friends. Between 7 ym and 10 am on the 28th she had spoken to many friends and was her usual cheerful and lively self. She never regulated consciousness and passed away pencefully in

scattered in a "besutiful pasture" mear her birthplace in Co. Durham.

PilkingTom - On 20th Docember 1996 William Lee (Bill), aged 91, much loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral Monday 30th December, 2pm st Wimborne Road Cometery, Sournemouth. Family flowers only. Enquiries to Deric-Scott. Family flowers only. Enquiries to Deric-Scott. Fortman Ledge Funeral Home. Sournemouth (01202) 309609.

RANCE - On December 18th 1996 at the Royal Marsden Hospital, lanet Rance (née Maxtons Graham), beloved wife of Parick and much loved mother and grandmother. Funeral Service at Morthabe of Parick and much loved mother and grandmother. Funeral Service at Morthabe Crematorism on Saturday December 28th at 230 pm. Flowers and enquiries to Cheises F.D. 2608 Fulhems Road, SWIO 9EL, tel (0171) 252-0008.

Iffiley - Peter, On December 19th. Peacefully in St Marthews Hospital. Morthampton. Much loved Hundred Service at Respirat. However only, donations if St Marty, Great Brington, Northampton, Iollowed by private organism, may be 4sts please to R. Hollowell & Son and Wil. Burbidge Funeral Directors, 148 Beech Avenue, Northampton, Iollowed by private cremation. Family flowers only, donations if desired for the Reitigh Heast Funeral Desertions in Sen of flowers to Rectifical Head. Caversham, 264 SDD. Momorial Meeting, Friends Meeting House, East Centon, 230 pm Enturity 11th january.

WEAVER - Margaret (née Swingler). of Hall Green, Birmingham, passed away after years of pain and wrifering on December, 14th 1996, aged 83 years. Beloved wife of Douglas and mother of Robert Sediy missed by all who have het. Service at Robin Hood Crematorium, Solihwell, on Monday 23rd. December, 23rd. Decembe

IN MEMORIAM --PRIVATE

ARGENT - T.D.R. 21st December 1993. Loving nemociae of Nick, never to be forgotten. MIMMER - Detak, desirate Ded, hever forgotten and niways in our thoughts. Simon, Jeremy, Jane and all the family.

GORDON-CHRESTIC - Jane and Latte wish to thank neighbours and friends for their kind messages of sympathy in the sudden loss of their mother, Barbara, who died at her home in Oxford OZ2 6RB on December 9th 1996. LHLEY-Lestie Marion (Peggy)
Lilley (née Wheeler)
28/57/1918 to 28/11/1996
Peggy Lilley, wife of
Geoffrey Lilley O.B.E.,
Emeritus Professor of
Aeronautics
and
Astanatics Emeritus Professor of Aeronautics and Astropautics at The University of Southampton died peacafully in her sleep on Thursday 28th November 1996. Pegy Wheeler was born on 28th May 1918 to Lily and Lieutenant L.P.
Wheeler of the 22nd London Learingur. Penery and DIAMOND **ANNIVERSARIES**

DU VIVIER:ASKE - On December 22pd 1936 at St Martin's Church, Scarborough, Dick to Mangaret. Now at Eating, W5 300. GOLDEN

ANNIVERSARIES Christehunch Priory on 21st
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STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

spoken to many triends and was her usual cheerful and lively self. She never regained connectousness and passed arway peacefully in her sleep the same evaning at 7.15 pm at Southsampton General Was held at St Michael and All Angels. Sassett Avenue, Southsampton on 5th Decamber with the Eevenand John Owen officiating and The Musical Director, fit Paul Isted at the origin. The Lessons were read by Lisa. Michael and Lucy (grandchild). In an interince for family remembrances Michael and Lucy (grandchild) played, a short recital on an electronic keyboard, and orstions were given by Grate, Lisa and Michael accompanied by Robert (grandscal). Lisa read a cology, titled, "Mainie composed by her husband, lacques. The Fenseal Services was concluded by an organ recessional based on the Liebested from Megner's Trivran and Isolde. The service was followed by a private cremation. The family are despit gasteful to Dr. Kevin Reynolds, and all the medical staff of Southampton. General Hospital, including Dr. Duphne Buchanan, Dr. McQuirty and Satter Stevens for all their expart medical care and Hodness given to Pegyr in done critical bours before she passed away. Geoffrey, Grate, Lisa and Michael offer their heartful thanks to all Pegyr's Lamby and friends, clabs, committees and for the many texpessions of sympethy to the family by card and istury including those from Lodds. South Artica and UEA. We miss you Musuay - we never had a chance to say Goodby.

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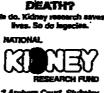
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THE RECORD SERVE

OBITUARIES

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CARL SAGAN

Carl Sagan, astronomer and author, died of myelodysplasia yesterday aged 62. He was born in New York City on November 9, 1934.

The American physicist and astronomer Carl Sagan was bestknown as a populariser of science who made his name through a series of books and television pro-grammes. He was a gifted communicator; although not always resisting the temptation to preach. In later years, a Pulitzer Prize behind him, his books diminished in real content as they grew in literary pretension. But his status as the leading media scientist in the United States was never in doubt, backed as it was by a compelling presence, good looks, and an enviable talent to explain.

Sagan was glad to have been born in the 20th century, the first moment in human history when man had the ability to leave the Earth and explore space. His lasting memorial is a plaque that will be carried through interstellar space for all eternity by the Pioneer space probe. Depicting a human body, some equations, and a map of the universe, the plaque was designed to tell any intelligence clever enough to decipher it where the Earth was, who inhabited it, and how advanced was their knowledge of the natural world.

"Astronomer, educator and author" was how Sagan described himself, and he was all three. His interests were wide, encompassing the origins of human intelligence, the possibilities of interstellar travel, the evolution of mankind and the consequences of nuclear war. He won many awards, even though his populist approach may not have endeared him to some of his scientific peers. The list of his awards alone, both national and international, occupied 30 lines in the current edition of Who's Who in America.

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grade.

The son of a Russian immigrant, a tailor who went on to become a factory manager in New York City, Carl Edward Sagan grew up in New Jersey. His fascination for astronomy began at an early age, despite the fact that once, on asking for a book on the stars at his local library, he was given a volume on Clark Gable. Although his parents knew little about science, they nurtured his enthusiasm and at school he proved an outstanding pupil. He won a series of scholarships to Chicago University from where he graduated with a BA degree in 1954 and a BSc degree in physics a year later.

With the help of a grant from the National Science Foundation, he stayed on at Chicago as a pre-doctoral Fellow in Physics and decided to concentrate on astronomy. In

1956, when he was only 22, he created his first public furore by announcing to the annual eting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science that he had disproved the then current theory that etation existed on the surface of Mars.

By 1960 Sagan's thesis. Physical Studies of Planets, had earned him a doctorate in astronomy and astrophysics and he moved to the University of California at Berkeley, from where he promptly pub-lished an article in Science proposing a scheme for making the planet Venus habitable human beings. After making a theoretical analysis of the planet's atmosphere and surface temperature — later confirmed as accurate by the Soviet space probe - Sagan suggested seeding the upper atmosphere of Venus with a species of algae which would. over time, absorb carbon dioxide and water vapour and replace them with oxygen.

This scheme was somewhat at variance with his concern, expressed a year previously, that microbes from Earth, carried into space by rockets and capsules, might contaminate the surfaces of the moon and the planets. Such contami-

nation, Sagan claimed, might destroy valuable scientific evidence about the development of the solar system and the origins of life on Earth. His pleas were taken seriously by both the United States and Soviet Governments, which began to take steps to sterilise their space vehicles before the

In 1962 Sagan took time off

launch.

from his study of astronomy, taking a post instead as Assistant Professor of Genetics at Stanford University School of Medicine, where he worked with Joshua Lederberg, win-ner of the 1958 Nobel Prize. There he set out to prove the idea that life on Earth had originated from simple inorganic compounds indigenous to our planet, such as ammonia, methane and water. In laboratory experiments he produced amino acids — the building blocks of proteins by exposing such materials to ultraviolet light and shock waves. It was thunder, he concluded, that produced most of the molecules responsible for the origin of life on Earth some 4 billion years ago.

Sagan moved to Harvard in 1963 to become Assistant Professor of Astronomy until 1968, when he found his academic

ed outright the notion of visitors from space. "Scientists are particularly bound to keep open minds," he wrote. " This is the lifeblood of science . . . I believe the search for extraterrestrial intelligence to be an exceedingly important one both for science and society. It is difficult to think of a more important scientific question. But I do not believe that the most efficient method of examining this topic is via the UFO problem. The best hope for such investigations is Nasa's unmanned planetary pro-Pramme and attempts at interstellar radio communication." Though politically indepen-

fused to join those who reject-

dent, Sagan showed no hesitation in leaping to the support of causes, invariably liberal in which he believed. In the light of history, his judgment was not always sound. In 1983 he led a group of scientists warning against the probability of a nuclear winter following any major nuclear exchange which could wipe out all life on Earth through the blotting out of sunlight. The thesis gained worldwide currency, provid-ing fine ammunition for the Kremlin at the height of the final phase of the Cold War. though subsequent analysis showed that it was flawed. In 1986 he inveighed against the Strategic Defence Initiative — President Reagan's "Star Wars" — in a widely

publicised debate with General James Abrahamson, director of the US Government's Strategic Defence Initiative. His judgment was at least consistent: later the same year he was among the 139 demonstrators arrested at the site of an underground nuclear test in Nevada. He was also active in the civil liberties movement, and in education for the disadvantaged.

Amid all this activity, while also carrying out active research at Cornell and appearing as a guest lecturer at universities around the world, Sagan still found time to write and publish a plethora of books. Most of his 17 works beginning in 1961 with Atmospheres of Mars and Venus and ending in 1994 with Pale Blue Dot dealt with one aspect or other of astronomy and space exploration, but he also explored the origins of life in Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors in 1992 and the development of the human mind in The Dragons of Eden (1977). His one novel Contact (1985) was based on the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. "My fondest hope," Sagan wrote, "is that it will be made obsolete by the pace of real scientific discovery." He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for literature in 1978 for The Dragons of Eden: Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence.

Although he remained scep-tical about UFOs, rating them along with reincarnation, al-Married three times, Carl chemy, telepathy and Santa Sagan is survived by his third Claus as "ideas which are wife, Anne, and by three sons charming if true," Sagan reand two daughters.

and he lived through some

tough times there - including

the bitterness of the miners

VINCAS BALICKAS

Vincas Balickas, former Lithuanian Ambassador in London, died on December 19 aged 92. He was born on May II, 1904

VINCAS BALICKAS, the last surviving diplomat appointed by the independent prewar government of Lithuania, kept the flag of Baltic defiance bravely flying through more than 50 dark years of Soviet occupation.

Refusing to accept Stalin's incorporation of his small state into the USSR, the man who first arrived in Britain in 1938 lived to see the fulfilment of what must have seemed a futile dream. With the recreation of an independent Lithuania after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, his obstinate patriotism was triumphantly recognised when he was reappointed at the age of 86 to represent his country this time as its Ambassador.

Throughout the Second World War and the Cold War that followed, it was his presence in London as much as anything that stiffened Britain's resolve never formally to recognise the incorporation of the three Baltic states into the Soviet Union. A proud, honourable patriot. Balickas also came to be the personification of Lithuania's independent spirit to the many exiles and refugees who had fled from Stalinist oppression.

Born in Virbalis, a small town in southwestern Lithuania, Vincas Balickas attended the Russian-language primary school there (Lithuania was part of the Russian empire then), learning to read and write Lithuanian at home. He was by all accounts a studious child and graduated with top marks from the Lithuanian gymnasium in the nearby town of Vilkaviskis.

In 1926 he was sent to study commerce, considered to be of first importance in the regeneration of a newly independent Lithuania, in Vienna. After completing his studies



there, he worked in the information and statistics department of the Bank of Lithuania, 1929-31. His work anracted the attention of the Foreign Ministry and he was invited to head the economies and commercial section of ELTA, the official Lithuanian news agency, of which he served as director for a year. In 1935 he was appointed deputy director of the economics department of the Foreign Ministry.

He came to London in 1938, one year before the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact which was to seal the fate of the Baltic states for the next five decades, to work as commercial counsellor at the Lithuanian Legation. His knowledge and experience of commerce was to prove instrumental in deepening the increasingly important trading links between Lithuania and Britain.

The post of commercial counsellor at the Lithuanian Legation in London was considered to be particularly important. Balickas was certainly to prove to be up to the job. Unfortunately, the occupation of Lithuania first by the Soviets in 1940, then by Nazi Germany the following year, and again by the Soviets in 1944, meant that Lithuania was to lose its independence and cease to be a trading country in its own right for the next five decades.

1940 to 1967 he From worked in the capacity of counsellor under Bronius Balutis, the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain and The Netherlands. In the immediare postwar years the legation was kept busy with looking after the welfare of the newly arrived political refugees coming mainly from Displaced Persons camps in Germany. They were able to issue passports which continued to be recognised by many countries throught the world. After Balutis's death in 1967, he became Charge d'Affaires, which position he was to hold until his appointment as Ambassador of the new Lithuanian Government under Pres-

ídent Landsbergis. In spite of lucrative reaching posts offered to him in the United States, Balickas felt it his duty to stay on in his post as the only representative of his country in Britain. Nor did old age ever dim his dedication. On his retirement as Ambassador in 1993 — after 55 years of service to Lithuania in Britain — his wealth of experience continued to be drawn upon in his capacity as honorary counsellor.

Balickas is survived by his wife Stefanija whom he married in 1932 and by a daughter and son. Another daughter

NORMAN HACKFORTH

Norman Hackforth. broadcaster, died on December 14 aged 87. He was born on December 20, 1908.

FOR almost thirty years Norman Hackforth was one of the more unlikely celebrities in British broadcasting. As the "mystery voice" on the popular radio game show Twenty Questions, he revealed to listeners the names of the objects whose identity the resident panel then had to guess. The programme made a popular catchphrase of the words "And the next object is . . ", uttered by Hackforth with vivid theatricality in a voice that blended the surreptitious and the trustworthy, the sinister and the confiding, the mystic and the humane" (or so Harold Nicolson said). After 19 years of introducing the objects, he himself was introduced on to the panel, replacing Richard Dimbleby when he became ill in 1965 and going on to serve

Hackforth enjoyed Twenty Questions and the curious fame it brought him, and he used his catchphrase as the title for the autobiography he published in 1975. But he would probably have preferred to be remembered for his work as a musician, in which capacity he provided piano accompaniment for some of the leading popular performers of the day, and played an important — if largely unrecognised - part in Noël Coward's postwar caba-ret success. He also served as the first music director of

tor almost a decade.

Anglia Television. Norman Hackforth was born in India, the son of a railway engineer. Sent to England at the age of six, he was brought up by four aunts and did not see his parents again until he was 12. Education at Aldenham School was fullowed by musical studies, then by a job in a Soho nightclub, playing the piano for £7 a week.

In the years between the wars. Hackforth worked in clubs and in the music halls. appearing with the Whispering Lunatics at the London Pavilion, and accompanying Fanny Ward (the suggestively clad "Flapper Granny") as she titillated the patrons of the Willesden Empire. He also enjoyed some success as a

songwriter, his *Evry Little* Thing I Do providing a hit for Jack Smith, the "Whispering Baritone". Film work - on two shorts (A Song or Two and Musical Moments, both 1929) and a full-length feature (Eight Cylinder Love, 1934) followed his participation in John Logie Baird's early television experiments: and his voice was put to commercial use in advertisements for Allison's bread and Woodbine

When the Second World War broke out Hackforth tried to volunteer for the RAF, but was rejected on medical grounds. Instead he joined Ensa, entertaining the troops in France before Dunkirk and performing in Lehanon with Josephine Baker. He went on to accompany Noël Coward on tours to South Africa and the Far East, beginning a collaboration that was to last until the mid-1950s. After the war, he accompanied Beatrice Lillie in cabaret at the reopening of the bombed-out Café de Paris and collaborated with Coward on the shows he gave at the same venue.

ke

Hackforth always insisted that he and Coward had worked together "very amiably"; but "the Master" seemed reluctant to acknowledge his debt to his musical collaborator, and remarks he made about him in his diaries. subsequently published were sometimes uncomplimentary. Hackforth's 1947 revue, Between Ourselves, was described by Coward as "awful, a couple of good ideas bungled and a cast of repellent

unattractiveness". It was after the failure of that revue that Hackforth was recruited for Twenty Questions by the producer Cleland Finn, whom he had met in South Africa with Coward. The programme was to be come a hugely popular British institution, and by the time Hackforth was dropped from it in 1975, some 90,000 mysterious objects had been puzzled over by the panel, with well over a million questions ("Animal, vegetable or mineral?") being asked in the quest to

identify them all. Hackforth did not allow the bitterness he felt at being replaced (by Brian Johnston) after almost thirty years on Twenty Questions to affect the tone of the cheerful volume of memoirs he published after he left the programme; nor was it evident in the biography he wrote of Kenneth Horne, a former chairman of the panel. in 1976.

His wife Pamela, whom he married in 1949, died last year.

THE RIGHT REV GERALD MOVERLEY

The Right Rev Gerald Moverley, Roman Catholic Bishop of Hallam, 1980-96, died on December 15 aged 74. He was born on April 9, 1922.

A FAITHFUL and unassuming pastoral bishop, Gerald Moverley made national news only once. This happened in 1976 when, as auxiliary bishop of Leeds, he refused to allow Mass to be said in the Wakefield prison cell of the IRA hunger-striker. Frank Stagg.

Stagg, who died ten days later, was by then too weak to make his way to the prison chapel and the bishop was. therefore, depriving him of the sacrament. But Moverley did so deliberately, taking the view that the prisoner was responsible for his own condition and, anyway, that it was morally wrong to seek to bring pressure to bear on the authorities by such methods.

It says something for the generally robust line adopted by the Vatican towards the Provisional IRA that only four years later Moverley should have been appointed to a diocese of his own — the newly created one of Hallam, based on Sheffield and covering south Yorkshire, parts of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. He remained the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hallam until illness forced his retirement earlier this year, the Pope accepting his resignation

only last July. Gerald Moverley was a Yorkshireman by birth, being born in Bradford, the eldest of five children. He was educated at various local Catholic schools, ending up at St Bede's Grammar School, Bradford, whence he went to test his vocation and train for the priesthood at Ushaw College, Durham. He was ordained in 1946 and seems to have been



instantly spotted as a high flyer, being recruited at once as private secretary to the Bishop of Leeds. Henry John Poskitt, by whom he had been

ordained. There then followed three years at the Angelicum University in Rome, where he took

a doctorate in Canon Law. This enabled him to become Chancellor (or chief legal official) of the Leeds diocese in 1957, even though at the time he had never run a parish. His first post as a parish priest was at St Brigid's, Churwell. to which he was appointed in 1960, and it also proved to be his last. His talents had long been recognised and it came as no surprise when he was named auxiliary bishop of Leeds in 1968. He spent 12 years in Leeds

home as Professor of Astrono-

my and Space Science at

Cornell University. He was

becoming increasingly in-

volved in the practical aspects

of space exploration, and was

hired by Nasa to lecture the

flight crews of the Apollo

missions to the moon. Later he

was responsible for the inter-

stellar messages carried by

Pioneer and Voyager space-craft and was a member of the

teams controlling the inter-

planetary explorations of the

unmanned Mariner, Viking

The possible existence of

extraterrestrial intelligence

was a constant facscination to

Sagan, and in 1971 he was

chairman of the US delegation

to the joint conference of the

Soviet and American Acade-

mies of Science, called to study

the possibility of communicat-

ing with beings from outer

space. It was this same obses-

sion that led him to dabble

with the phenomenon of

Unidentifed Flying Objects,

editing a scientific debate on

the subject in 1972.

and Galileo space probes.

as assistant to Bishop Gordon Wheeler (like his more cele-brated contemporary, Bishop Christopher Butler, a Catholic convert from Anglicanism) and during that time won himself a respected place in the life of the city. He was not, however, fully stretched and his appointment to his own diocese did not come before time. Hallam certainly presented him with a challenge

strike of 1984-85 and the 1989 Hillsborough football tragedy. But he soon established him-self in the life of what had come to feel almost an embattled community and his quiet. reflective approach won him many friends (few of whom had much idea of the intellectual distinction on which it was based). Outside his diocese he found time to be vice-president of the Church's Commission on Jus-

tice and Peace and president of the Canon Law Society, as well as serving as consultant for the revision of The Code of Canon Law in 1983. Yet perhaps the outside appointment that gave him greatest pleasure was his comparatively humble membership of the Council of Sheffield University, on which he served from 1985 until his death.

Weekend anniversaries

TODAY BIRTHS: Mathurin Régnier, poet, Chartres, France, 1573; Jean Racine, dramatist, La Ferté-Milon, 1639; Leopold von Ranke, historian, Wiehe. Germany, 1795; Robert missionary. Moffat, Ormiston, East Lothian, 1795; Sir Joseph Whitworth, Bt. mechanical engineer. Stock-port, 1803; Benjamin Disraeli, Hobbs, cricketer, Hove, 1963. 1st Earl of Beaconsfield, Prime The Pilgrim Fathers landed at Minister 1868 and 1874-80, London, 1804; Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury 1869-82, Edinburgh, 1811; Joseph Stalin, Soviet leader. Gori, Georgia, 1879; Dame Rebecca West.

novelist and critic, London, 1892 DEATHS: Giovanni Boccaccio, writer, Certaldo, Italy-1375; Catherine of Braganza. Queen consort of Charles II, 1988.

Lisbon, 1705; James Parkinson. physician, London, 1924; F. Scott Fitzgerald, novelist. Hollywood, 1940; George Patton, American general of the Second World War, Heidelberg, Germany, 1945; Gladys Ripley, contralto, Chichester. 1955; Lewis Terman, psychologist, Palo Alto, California, 1956; Eric Coates, composer, London, 1957; Sir John (Jack)

Plymouth, Massachusetts. Robert Liston used an anaesthetic (ether) for the first time in a British operation, University College Hospital, London,

A Pan American jumbo jet blew up and crashed on the Scottish border town of Lockerbie killing 270 people,

TOMORROW BIRTHS: Karl Abel, composer, Cöthen, Germany, 1725;

John Crome, landscape painter, Norwich, 1768; Jean Henri Fabre, naturalist, St-Léons, France, 1823; Giacomo Puccini, composer, Lucca, Italy, 1858: Edwin Arlington Robinson, poet, Head Tide, Maine, 1869; Edgar Varèse, composer, Paris, 1883. DEATHS: Duc de Sully, sol-

dier and statesman, Villebon, France, 1641; William Hyde Wollaston, physician, London, 1828; George Eliot, novelist, London, 1880; Dwight Moody, evangelist, Northfield, Massachusetts, 1899; Baron Richard von Krafft-Ebing, neuro-psychiatrist, Graz, 1902; Nathanael West, novelist, El Cento, California, 1940; Beatrix Potter, children's writer, Sawrey, Lancashire, 1943;

Harry Langdon, silent film star, California, 1944. Alfred Dreyfus, a French army officer, was imprisoned

of espionage, later proved false, 1894. Willhelm Rontgen made the first radiograph or x-ray of his wife's hand, 1895.

on Devil's Island on a charge

The 70mph speed limit was introduced in Britain. 1965.

Latest wills

Bessie Compton, Haslingden, Rossendale, Lancashire, left estate valued at £822,714 net. E822,714 net.

She left £5,000 to Church of Emmanuel Holcombe; £500 each to Parish of Emmanuel Holcombe to be spent in connection with Canon Lewis Hall, British Red Crass.

RSPCa; £250 to North West Riding Association for the Handicapped; £200 to Manchester and District Home for Lost Dogs. "MADAME POMPADOUR." MISS EVELYN LAYE'S SUCCESS. Musical comedy seems temporarily to have

reverted from the hysterical to the historical A little while ago we had a musical piece woven around the life and loves of the Empress Catherine. At Daly's Theatre last night we had another, dealing with the career of Mme. Pompadour. The former deait with its heroine in so kindly a way that it might well have been called The Whitewashing of Catherine, but there was no whitewashing last night.

We were shown a Pompadour who was a distinctly naughty young lady, but Miss Evelyn Laye, who played the part, while reveiling in its naughtiness managed to suggest not only the charm which is essential to the success of the perfect "vampire." but the eleverness which is just as essential for her occasional extrication from the deep waters into which her proclivities led her. Eventually she had to reveal a little sentiment of a domestic kind, which struck the first jarring note in the portrayal of the character. We are sure that Pompadour would never have given up a potential lover just because he was her 's husband, and this is what she was

made to do last night. Miss Laye certainly made the most of a

ON THIS DAY

December 21, 1923

Evelon Lave, who died this year at the age of 95, was on the London stage by the time she was to and for many years was the darling of theatregoers appearing in such musical shows as The Shop Girl, Lilse Time and The New Moon.

great chance. Her singing of a long and occasionally difficult part was always admirable, and her acting, with the exception of a rather irritating giggle, was consistently good. She did really suggest the beautiful, brilliant, and unscrupulous favourite who made such use of her talents, and it was an unexpected pleasure to have for the leading character in a musical piece one which, even after being "put to music", did not seem to lose many of its human qualities. Madame Pompadour is certainly put to many trials. for, when travelling incognito (for no very good purpose, it is to be wagered), she first

hears the frank opinion of the proletariat about her character, and then falls in love with an amorous young gentleman whom she enrols in her bodyguard of soldiers, in order that he may always he near her. This is the man whom she afterwards renounces because he is her sister's husband, and before he is renounced he causes a great deal of trouble in the breast of King Louis and others at court. Mr. Derek Oldham makes a manly and sympathetic figure of the lover. He, uso has many songs to sing, and sings them excellently.

Mr. Bertram Wallis as the King is a thought too dignified for that vacillating monarch, but vacillates convincingly enough, in spite of that. Mr Huntley Wright manages to extract a great deal of humour out of the part of a kind of village "Gringoire", who insults Pom-padour only to benefit by her favours, and Mr. Leonard Mackay is sufficiently Theavy" as one of those foolish chiefs of police who make the lot of the hero on the stage such a pleasing one, Mr. Leo Fall's music is always tuneful and occasionally more than that, and the "book" is well rendered into English by Mr. Frederick Lonsdale and Mr. Harry

Graham. The piece had an enthusiastic reception, and the audience obtained its way and prevailed on Miss Laye to say a few words.

NATURE NOTES

NEWS

Bail bid in 'road rage' murder case

■ A judge will be asked on Monday to free Tracie Andrews who is charged with the murder of her fiance. Magistrates were told that she stabbed Lee Harvey 37 times and then lied that he had been the victim of a "road rage" attack.

Details of the case emerged after her solicitor took the unusual step of asking for reporting restrictions to be lifted....... Page 1

Probation for woman guilty of infanticide

Emma Gifford, the daughter of a retired chief executive of the Rank Organisation who killed her newborn son after giving birth alone and in secret in her Kensington flat was put on probation yesterday after pleading guilty to infanticide. She pleaded not guilty to trying to conceal the birth Pages 1, 5

Freeman tipped

Roger Freeman, the minister charged with sorting out the beef crisis, is the leading contender to take over organisation of the millennium exhibition Page 1

James and Alice top James has usurped Thomas, Alice

is top while Charlotte's star has fallen in this year's Times survey of the most popular names for Page I

Fish quota retained

Tony Baldry, the Fisheries Minister, has claimed victory in a deal in Brussels that will keep Britain's fish quotas at 1996 levels... Page 2

High-heel case falls A mother jailed for attacking her

husband's mistress with a stiletto heeled shoe has been freed Page 3 Miracle baby At the age of 15 months. Beth Nee

is a picture of health and happiness. Yet it is something of a miracle that she is alive...... Page 4 ness

Santa plea lost in the post for 85 years

No faith in schools

Leading Roman Catholic independent schools are calling for greater support from parents and bishops Catholics send their children to other public schools...... Page 9

Guerrillas holding over 400 hostages in Peru have told the Government they will start killing their captives unless their demands are met today......Page 12

Yeltsin returns President Yeltsin says he will be

back at his office in the Kremlin on Monday morning and plans a busy schedule to make up for his six-month absence due to ill-

A letter that Santa Claus never received has fluttered down the chimney of a cottage 85 years after it was "posted" there by nine-year-old Mabel Higgs. On December 8, 1911, she wrote asking Santa to "remember the very poor children in the slums" and for a story book and a box of chocolates

Milkman questioned

A milkman given three life sentences for knife attacks on two women is to be questioned by detectives about the murder of a teenage schoolgirl Page 7

as increasing numbers of wealthy Hostage deadline

> - OPINION -No Elgin, no Marbles: The Parthenon was the symbol of one very unpopular Greek

city. The disputed works were one small part of the Parth-LETTERS

John Redwood on the euro;

Prince of Wales's views on

.. Page 17

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Evita Peron was the secular saint of the century, now reincarnated by the anti-saint, Mad-

OBITUARIES

author, Vincas Balickas, former Lithuanian Ambassador in London ..

BUSINESS

Morgan Grenfell: The fund

manager finally unveiled its

£200 million-plus compensa-

tion package for more than

90,000 investors Page 21

LLoyd's: Lloyd's of London apologised again for setbacks to its settlement plan, as a name turned to the courts in an attempt to force pay-

These birds emit an increasingly shrill "gobbledegook" whilst being prepared for an election roasting. Not trussworthy.

Christmas Turkeys (Quattuorhoræ gasmarktres)

er manager .

Santa's sack is empty. There are no Porsche Boxters or Mercedes SLKs in Britain

SPORT

England to 306 Page 40

Football: Stuart Pearce is

Nottingham Forest's caretak-

Zimbabwe Test: iOI not out from Nasser Hussain helped

No big threat: This week, Richard Morrison writes, Jeremy Irons threatened to leave the country if his new film, Lolita, is censored. Oh dearPage 15

iconesque: Ani DiFranco confirmed her status as a tough folk singer and rising lesbian icon, with a London gig....Page 15 |

Easy listening Page 19 Fashion FashionPage 30 Food and drink ... Page 35

Weekend

animals fare Pages 1.2



of champagne...... Page 4 Sales: The best bar-

The Simpsons get festive The Prodigy: best video Boxing Day at the box office

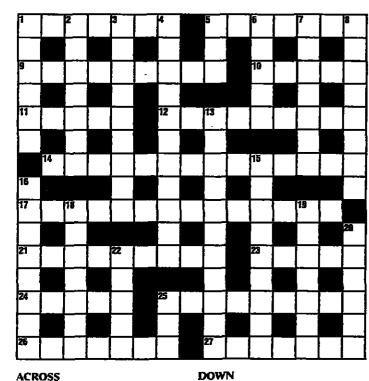


best films and highlights of all the other smallscreen entertainment up to the end of the year

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,357

A limited edition, 1970 vintage bottle of Aberlour single malt whisky, the only malt whisky to have twice won the prestigious Gold Medal and Pot Still Trophy at the International Wine & Spirit Competition, will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London El 9DD. The winners and solution will

Name/Address



group (7).

fires (5).

I Marvellous Scot's left political

- 5 Girl put on coat for play (7). 9 A girl they maltreated for so very
- long (5-4).
- 10 Discover there isn't a feast (5). II Uninvolved in a hoax that back-
- 12 It's a small world! (9). 14 Horror film review is a study in
- the mind's depths (14).
- 17 A look at life unaffected by past record (7,7).
- 21 Naturally receiving fine for going in wrong direction (3.6).
- 23 Ruddy cheeky stuff as girl's first grabbed by lecher (5).
- 24 In delight, bishop gives land to dergy (5). 25 Woman will support old sailor
- 26 Toddler's beginning to walk on short legs? Nonsense! (7).
- 27 Historian has been upset by a

Solution to Puzzle No 20,351

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: M. R. Abbasi, Prestbury, Cheltenham; J. C. Hearn, Crouch End Hill, London: M. Sargent, Pinner, Middlesex; S. D. Lewis, Ormskirk, Lancashire; E. Gregory, Braes of Garily, Aberdeenshire.

I Peasant died — what a shame! (6). 2 Plant showing insect damage (7). 3 Mechanic and I refit car that's been damaged (9).

4 Forcibly crush bread in vesse 5 Forcefully beat up and disfigure (5). 6 French chemist said nothing, a

strange person (5). 7 I've no problem - useless being

discontented (7).

8 Level of standards dropped in some respect (4-4). 13 Prison and hard labour, possibly?

15 Eventually team-mate gets on 16 Unlike Blakeney, you heard shot-

gun going off (8). 18 Material for over-rich cheese (7). 19 Crowd's murmuring for food (7). 20 Hell, the French do interrupt

rudely (6). 22 You'll find her in high spirits (5). 25 Woman is separated from children (3).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,356

AANTORMATION. Latest Road and Weather conditions UK Weather- All regions 0336 444 910 UK Roads - All regions 0336 401 410

0336 401 746 0336 401 747 0336 401 748 0336 401 910 0336 401 388 leside M25 M25 and Unk Roads National Motorways 0336 407 505

World City Weather Other 153 destinations world wide 6 day forecast 0336 41 1216

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0336 401 896 0336 401 887

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun sets 354 pm 4.10 am London 3 54 pm to 8 05 am Bristol 4 04 pm to 8 14 am Edinburgh 3 40 pm to 8 43 am Manchester 3 51 pm to 8.24 am

TOMORROW Sun sets 3 54 pm 5.16 am Full moon December 24 London 3.54 pm to 8.05 am Bristol 4.04 pm to 8.14 am Edinburgh 3.40 pm to 8.43 am Manchester 3.52 pm to 8.24 am Penzance 4.23 pm to 8.20 am

HIGH TIDES King's Lynn Leith

HIGHEST & LOWEST

FORECAST

☐ General: the South will be over-cast with further rain or drizzle, with sleet in places and snow over hills and Downs, although amounts should generally be negligible. Brighter, drier weather in the North may not reach the far South West. It will be cold and

windy. Scotland and Northern Ireland will be bright with surny intervals. Many places dry but in the east cloudier conditions will produce wintry showers. It will be cold but winds will be

☐ London, SE England, Central S England, SW England, S Wales: Rain or drizzle, sleet or snow on hills, slowly clearing from north. Winds fresh or strong easterly. Cold. Max 5C (41F).

☐ E Anglia, E England, NE England: rather cloudy, coastal showers, sleet or snow flurries inland. Wind

fresh or strong easterly. Cold. Max 4C

. Page 21

☐ Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland, N Ireland: bright or sunny intervals. Mainly dry. Winds moderate easterly. Cold. Max 5C

Channel Isles: overcast, rain or drizzle at times, dull. Wind strong to gale easterly. Cold. Max 7C (45F). Borders, Edinburgh & Dunde en, Moray Firth, NE Scotsnow flurries inland. Wind light or moderate easterly. Cold. Max 4C

Contionic most places dry and bright, wintry showers in East, cloudy in South West.

AROUND BRITAIN

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Changes to the chart above from noon; high G will extend slowly south with little change in central pressure. Complex low C will fill slowly in situ. Low R will move northeast and fill





Phantom of the Opera



 HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE LONDON 1997 Valid 9/1/97 to 27/4/97

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> Equities cap the festive sp

More chiefs



EXECUTIVE VOICE

Why an independent oil sector remains important to Britain PAGE 22

Monday Tuesday ∪ W ednesday T hursday_

WORKING WEEK

Smythson's far from stationary stationer **PAGE 23**



SPORT

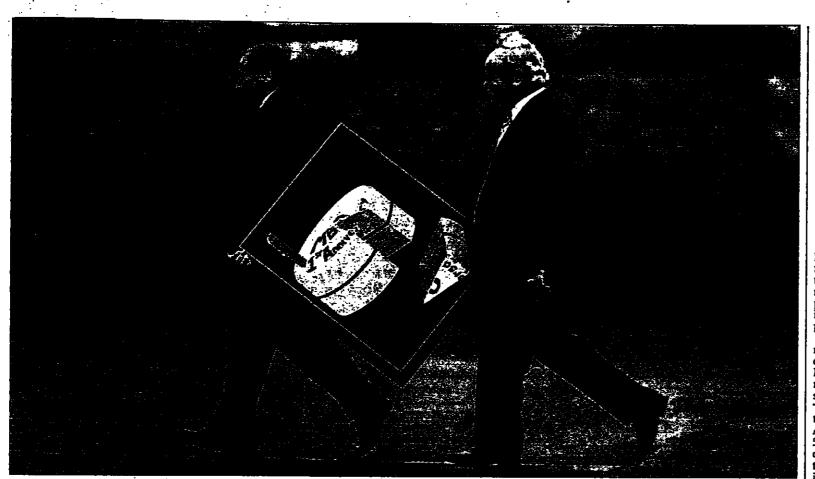
Why Shilton is still saving for his old age **PAGES 33-40**

THE HIDDEN ASSETS OF THE STOCK **EXCHANGE**

PAGE 23

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996



Many happy returns: Tony Rados, left, finance director of Amtico, and John Harris, chief executive, yesterday celebrating the flooring company's first year as a management buyout and operating profits up 75 per cent and sales up 18 per cent. Staff numbers have increased by 9 per cent, to 440

Bid deadline extended in battle for Northern

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY INDUSTRIAL:

THE FATE of Northern Electric hung in the balance last night after an 11th-hour extension of the announcement of acceptances for CE Electric's hostile bid.

The delayed conclusion to the hard-fought and often controversial £782 million bid battle underlined the closeness of the struggle. Right up to the deadline for acceptances at lpm, it had been clear that investors were torn over the Advisers blamed some of

value of CE Electric's bid. the delay on glitches in Crest, the paperless share-trading

trars, was going on late into the night with a cut-off point set for midnight. The Takeover Panel approved the delay. While acceptances would have drifted in throughout the

offer period the institutional investors would have waited until the last moment in case a white knight bidder appeared.

On Northern's side in one of the toughest battles in recent takeover history has been the public support of three major institutions — Prudential, the largest shareholder, who declared that the bid undervalued Northern, Foreign & Colonial and M & G.

On top of that Northern is a share mark, CE Electric, the its first bid. Counting by Royal thought to have been able to US grouping led by Calfrom small shareholders, who . own about 17 per cent of the company. Northern Electric's Northern's board.

small shareholder group endorsed the rejection of the 650p-a-share offer and objected to CE Electric's tactic of ringing individual shareholders at home.

Northern first rebuffed CE Electric last month, although the two sides had held talks about a takeover. The regional electricity company, one of the last five independents, complained that a first offer of 630o a share was too low and said it had been willing to enter full negotiations at the E7

saying that it had kept an amount in reserve to win over

Doubts about a referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission were also overcome when CalEnergy, which is junk-rated for investment in the US, was able to offer sufficient assurances to the regulator to secure his bless-

ing for the bid. CE Electric's swoop on Northern is part of a wave of interest in UK electricity comnanies by US utilities. Two of the four other independents have agreed US bids and three other regional electricity busiUS companies.

ern has faced a hostile bid. Last year it mounted a £550 million defence against Trafalgar House (since bought by Kvaerner). Northern's defence then was a bumper shareholder giveaway, which came just weeks after the regulator had delivered a pricing review intended to clamp down on electricity prices.

Northern's defence this time revolved around a 17 per cent jump in the dividend for 1998, reductions in gearing and likely joint ventures. It has also increased dividends.

Morgan Grenfell moves to end trust scandal

BY ROBERT MILLER BANKING CORRESPONDENT

MORGAN GRENFELL, the troubled fund manager, yes-terday finally unveiled its £200 million-plus compensation package for more than 90,000 investors in three of its Euro pean funds.

After detailed and complex negotiations with external accountants, legal counsel and lmro, the watchdog for fund managers, Morgan Grenfell said it had been agreed that anyone who was invested in the funds at any time between August 1, 1995 and September 1996 will be considered for compensation, whether or not they continue to hold those investments". Investors will receive the compensation by

the end of next April. Dealings in Morgan Gren-Growth and European Capi tal Growth funds were suspended on September 2 after irregularities where found in the trusts' portfolios. Many of the investments held were in highly illiquid and unquoted shares in breach of City rules. Deutsche Bank, Morgan Grenfell's parent, purchased E180 million of these securities as a first step to clearing up one of the biggest scandals to

hit the unit trust industry. At the time of the suspension some £1.4 billion was invested in the three funds but since dealings resumed on September 5 some £400 mil-Peter Young, the fund manager of two of the trusts, was dismissed for gross misconduct" and is the subject of a continuing Serious Fraud Of-

fice investigation. The August 1995 start date for the compensation was fixed because that is when Morgan Grenfell believes that Mr Young began to establish a complicated web of Luxembourg companies.

Tempus, page 24 Cash or units, page 25
Anne Ashworth, page 27

WEEKEND



Anne Ashworth on Morgan Grenfell and the watchdog

BUILDING SOCIETIES

News in the new year of Halifax payouts



The true cost of an investment guarantee

PENSIONS

Questions you should ask about



BORROWING



THE

How to shrink your Christmas credit card debt

BUSINESS TODAY

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144;

FTSE 100 4077.5 (+26.3)
Yield 3.91%
FTSE All share 1993.71 (+13.86)
Allides 1999.46 (+119.79)

3-mith Interbank 6°2% (5°3%)

London close \$369.35 (\$369.05) denotes midday trading price

Gas cuts Fears increased yesterday of cuts in industrial gas supplies

Equities capture the festive spirit

By Michael Clark, stock market correspondent

CHRISTMAS came early for investors on the London stock market as share prices soared to their highest levels yet. The FT-SE 100 index of leading shares reached 4,100 for the first time before seeing earlier gains halved. Even so, it ended 26.3 up at a record closing high of 4,077.6, a rise on the week of 105 points.

It followed a breathtaking performance overnight on Wall Street where the Dow Jones industrial average soared 136 points, its biggest one-day rise for nine years. In early trading last night, Wall Street kept up the pace with a rise of 75 points. before the Dow fell back to reduce the lead to 31.1 at 0.504.78

The London market this week has been fuelled by a series of

corporate bids, including an agreed offer for London Elec-tricity, and some year-end window dressing by the big City institutions who have

been squaring up their book positions. This has led to stock Brokers have reported some heavy turnover in shares this week although much of it has been conducted between trad-ers, presenting a slightly false view of events. A total of 944

million shares had changed by the close of business last night. The bond market experienced a further flattening of the yield curve as investors continued switching out of shorter-dated coupons. Prices at the longer end rose £4 on average.

Stock market, page 24

Newman Tonks sells £27m stake

By OLIVER AUGUST

NEWMAN TONKS, the engineering company, yester-day strengthened its def-ences against a hostile bid from FKI by selling its 33 per cent stake in a Spanish security products company for £27 million.

Newman's stake plus a majority family stake in Tesa, based in Irún, northeast Spain, were bought by Wil-hams, the fire protection products manufacturer, for a total of £100 million. FKI had launched a £200 million offer for Newman Tonks last Tuesday after criticising the Newman management for lack of focus and underperformance. Geoff Gahan, Newman

chief executive, said; "We are deploying financial resources away from non-core areas."

Name turns to the courts for payment

By Jon Ashworth

LLOYD'S of London apologised again yesterday for setbacks to its settlement plan. as a name turned to the courts in an attempt to force payment of funds. The unidentified name is suing Lloyd's for £33,428, in what is seen as a test case.

The plaintiff is one of 12,000 "accepting" names owed money under the Lloyd's settlement. More than 8,400 have been paid — 210 cheques worth E9 million were dispatched yesterday - but progress has been frustratingly slow. Lloyd's has admitted that the payments will continue well beyond the original mid-December deadline.

Michael Freeman, the lawyer acting in the case, speaks for 240 accepting names, none Respondents design as a dying breed.

of whom has been paid. One couple is owed £500,000. Mr Freeman said: "They are not getting their cheques." Lloyd's said there was always a risk that payments would slip into 1997, and described the court action as

'completely irrational". John

Stace, deputy chairman, said:

"There is nothing sinister. All the money is there." Names are due interest on outstanding funds. A separate test case seeking judgments against "non-accepting" names was adjourned yesterday until mid-January.

☐ Corporate capital will dominate Lloyd's within two years, says a survey by Whittingdale, the fund management group. Respondents described names

the former building society and now

the banking group's residential mort-

gage arm, who becomes group director

of customer finance. Mr Longhurst

will also become chairman of C&G in

place of John Bays, who will become

Kent Atkinson is to become the

group finance director and Michael

underway by this time next week, or whenever it suits you best. For full written details of our low-cost, easy-to-start pensions please call us FREE on 0800 374857

PENSION

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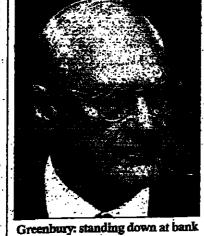
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Are you EMPLOYED or SELF EMPLOYED (please circle)

Store chiefs leave revamped Lloyds TSB have increased their involvement in elevation of Andrew Longhurst, chief By ROBERT MILLER executive of Cheltenham & Gloucester,



BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE battle for financial services supremacy in the high street yesterday led to wide-sweeping boardroom changes at Lloyds TSB Group in an attempt to avoid growing conflicts of

The banking group announced that Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman of Marks & Spencer, who became a bank director in 1992, and John Gildersleeve, a Tesco director, who linked-up with Lloyds Bank in 1994, are to stand

Lloyds TSB said that the two senior directors had decided that "it would be appropriate for them to leave the board, as both Marks & Spencer and Tesco. the provision of financial services". Marks & Spencer promotes its own

plastic card as well as branded unit trusts, loans and personal pensions, and the decision by Sir Richard to sever his Lloyds TSB link may herald a further move by M&S into personal financial services. Tesco offers its customers a Clubcard payment card in conjunction with NatWest, and more

developments are expected in this field.

The boardroom changes at Lloyds

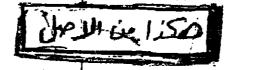
TSB precede Peter Elivood taking the helm as group chief executive in February, when he is to succeed Sir Brian Pitman, who will become the bank's chairman, in place of Sir Robin lbbs who is retiring.

Other appointments include the

Fairey will be the group director of central services, with responsibility for the retail networks of Lloyds and TSB as integration continues. Stephen Maran will take charge of savings and investments at board level, as well as the integration of Lloyds Abbey Life into the rapidly

expanding banking group.

deputy chairman.



Why Britain still needs an independent oil sector

ritain is unique in Europe in having established a substantial, independent exploration and production sector (E & P). Experience has amply demonstrated that the independents have made, and continue to make, a vital contribution to the UK economy, and help to sustain the power and effectiveness of the UK oil and

Our independent E & P companies are at the heart of a liberalised energy market and provide secure and diverse supplies at competitive prices. They deserve a place in the UK energy market because they provide costeffective and imaginative ways of exploring and exploiting our North Sea assets, as well as ensuring continuing interest from the financial sector in its continued development

The professionalism and technological know-how of these dynamic British businesses are much sought after around the world and, quite apart from the wealth they create for shareholders, their export of skills is of real benefit to the UK economy.

In the mid 1980s, Brindex (the Association of British Independent Oil Exploration Companies). the trade body of UK indepen-dents of which I was chairman. boasted a membership of more than 50 companies. After last year's disappearance of Goal and Aran, the roll call now stands at just 11 companies. As this year ends, another of that number the company where I have spent the past 23 years - finds itself in the sights of a predator seeking its valuable assets.

While the number of independents has fallen, their status has increased substantially. Collectively we now enjoy a market capitalisation of more than £7.5 billion and currently employ around 3,000 people in our North Sea and worldwide activities. We operate in 38 countries worldwide, we have combined reserves of more than one billion barrels of oil and five-and-a-half trillion

cubic feet of gas. The UK indepen-dents offer investors a diversity of companies to invest in, ranging from those engaged in high-risk exploration to those who concentrate on lower-risk exploitation.

The professionalism and sophistication developed within the British independents continues to lead to ever greater successes, and not just through speculative activity but by developing clear strategies that focus on production yield management, low-cost development and leading edge infrastructure technology, that in turn add

What should be remembered is that the history of oil and gas discoveries and developments in the North Sea is one in which the independents have made a major contribution. Through numerous joint venture partnerships, a symbiotic relationship has grown between the majors and both larger and smaller independents; each has its role but they interact with positive results in operational. technical and commercial spheres.



Gourlay Going back to the early history of North Sea oil developments, the initial four rounds of UK offshore

licence awards went principally to the major oil companies. But from the fifth round onwards, the independent sector has gained a far greater share of the licences being awarded tapping new sources of finance in the form of risk capital and debt finance and creating numerous joint ventures

and partnerships with the major deed, ironic to note that the international players.

Since the mid-1970s, the independent sector has made a substantial and growing contribution in exploration and development and innovative financing. Many of the skills developed within this sector have a particular relevance to a maturing hydrocarbon province such as the North Sea and, therefore, with suitable encouragement, the remaining independents should be playing an even greater role in the future of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

The independent companies have become skilled at improving their competitive positions by finding lower-cost solutions for future operations and developments that will be vital as the North Sea matures. In our own case, that has meant the use of low-cost reusable platforms on our offshore Dutch gasfields and the introduction of a purpose-built floating production vessel in the fast-track development of the UKCS Gryphon Field. It is, in-

approach to my company, Chyde, came just 48 hours after we announced an agreement with BP and BHP that gave us our first operated development in the UKCS. Such deals are typical of the ways in which efficient independents can — and should — be acquiring acreage that would be deemed peripheral or marginal by

the multinationals and making

Both the challenge and the opportunity for the independent sector is to ensure that the UK's offshore oil and gas assets continue to be exploited by their true potential. We need to win more access, for example, to the larger amounts of acreage that remain under-explored and under-ex-ploited. As a group of UK independents we strongly support the Department of Trade & Industry in its efforts to find more effective

ways of releasing such acreage. Over the past 25 years, British independent E & P companies have developed the management skills to bring new exploration and exploitation ideas to bear and to develop, on a cost-effective basis, smaller oil and gasfields on long-held acreage, which may not be a priority for the giants of our whson's

The British independents compete successfully on the world stage in international exploration and production ventures. We ensure that the UK economy gets full benefit from the considerable remaining potential of the North Sea and so provide a stable platform (no pun intended!) for our continuing growth both at home and overseas.

☐ Malcolm Gourlay is chairman of Clyde Petroleum, one of the UK's leading independent exploration and production com-panies. He is also a past chairman of Brindex, the Association of British Independent Oil Exploration Companies, and was recently elected honorary treasurer of UKOOA, the UK Offshore Operators' Association.

Vardey to resign at exchange

By ROBERT MILLER

GILES VARDEY, a senior director of the London Stock Exchange, yesterday announced his resignation publicly, so permitting his entry into talks with prospective market employers. Mr Vardey, who is 40, has been at the Stock

Exchange for four years as director of markets development and marketing. At one stage earlier this year, City watchers had him listed as an outside bet for the chief executive's post, which went to Gavin Casey, the former Smith New Court and then Merrill Lynch executive.

It was no secret in the market that Mr Vardey would have liked to have won the top job, but it is understood that he never formally submitted an application. Mr Vardey will stay in his present post until the end of March, but yesterday's announcement frees him to talk to other Stock Exchange member firms without giving rise to any potential

John Kemp-Welch, the years, Giles Vardey has made a valuable contribution to many areas of the work of the exchange."

Ofgas warns industrial users of supply cuts

By Christine Buckley, industrial correspondent

FEARS increased yesterday of cuts in industrial gas supplies this winter when the regulator gave warning of significant interruptions and of the potential for gas prices in the

wholesale market to rocket. The alert follows a similar warning from TransCo, British Gas's pipelines division, that large gas users with interruptible contracts were

likely to see supplies cut. The impact of large cuts in industrial contracts triggered the Department of Trade and Industry to intervene in the electricity industry so that the security of generation — much of which is gas-fired — was maintained. The electricity pool, the wholesale market for power, implemented controversial measures by which generators are paid extra if they switch fuels and keep power stations available.

Ofgas said that in harsh interruptions of customers with interruptible gas contracts could well occur". A report also emphasised that short-term gas prices in the

wholesale gas market - the flexibility mechanism - may be very high".

Large industrial users that take interruptible contracts because they offer cheaper fuel often leave themselves without back-up supplies. Controversially, a large number of hospitals use such contracts.

Concern over gas supply security has been triggered because of increased demand and also because of the way in which gas supplies must now be balanced by shippers on a daily basis under the network code designed to ensure competition works effectively. Ofgas has asked TransCo to consider whether changes to the code are needed. So far there have been 108 modifications to the code introduced in March and further changes are planned.

Ofgas complained of a lack of communication last winter some interruptions. The company said that it had already addressed such problems and was seeking closer liaison with gas shippers and customers.



Profit hitch: Marshall Smalley, right, managing director of Meconic the world's largest producer of legal opiates, and Jim Cook. that a poor poppy harvest was hitting margins on its opiate-based products. Its contract manufacture business is also expected to show a more modest rate of growth, although overall year-on-year progress should be better.

But shares in the company rose 1312 p to close at a record high of 328½ p, after the doubling in halfyear profits, before tax, to £4.8 million. Turnover margins improved 4.8 per cent, to 34.7 per cent, as the company continued its shift away from the opiates business to contract manufacture. The interim dividend was lifted 21 per cent, to 2p, payable February 4. Tempus, page 24

EAGER investors have made sure that the £42 million

flotation of Sunderland, the Premiership football club. is 2.7 times oversubscribed. This means that a healthy premium is expected when the shares start trading on Christmas Eve and bodes well for the impending flotation of near neighbours Newcastle United, which said it will go for a £160 million flotation in the new year. Meanwhile West Bromwich Albion, the Nationwide Division One club, has confirmed it is to take a listing on AIM. No new money is being raised.

Fortis ties up £858m

FORTIS, the Dutch-Belgium insurance, banking and

investment group, yesterday became the world's 14th largest

asset manager after completing the £858 million purchase of

MeesPierson from ABN Amro, the Dutch banking combine.

The MeesPierson deal, one of the largest acquisitions in Dutch history, will give Fortis total assets under management of £75 billion. To finance the acquisition of

MeesPierson, which specialises in asset management and

private banking, Fortis will increase its net equity, reallocate

existing available funds and employ other financing

Fortis said of the deal: "The acquisition is a perfect fit in the

group's strategy, and is also fully in line with its financial and.

equisition criteria. MeesPierson will provide Fortis with both critical mass in asset management and new, complementary activities in attractive markets, including

private banking and corporate banking. The newly enlarged bank, which will be the fourth largest in The Netherlands,

continued: The addition of this new component to the group

will create even more opportunities for Fortis companies, starting with those in The Netherlands."

Sunderland popular

MeesPierson deal

Forminster advances

ORMINSTER, the cloth e manufacturer that hought Kookai, the up-market fashion chain, in August, has reported a rise in interim pre-tax profits to £768,000 in the half year to October 31, from £512,000 in the same period last year. Turnover was down to £10.8 million, from £11.6 million. Earnings per share were up to 4.07p, from 2.36p. There will be an interim dividend of 1.22p per ordinary share, up from 1.17p. The dividend will be payable on February 17.

Lancashire lifts profit

LANCASHIRE ENTERPRISES, the economic development specialists, yesterday reported a 7.5 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £2.86 million (£2.66 million) for the year ending October 31. Turnover was up from £18.37 million to £20.21 million and basic earnings per share were up 1.8 per cent to 11.1p. The dividend per share is 4.4p (4p), payable on April 30. This year saw the retirement as managing director of Michael Hynes, who has led the company since it became a plc in 1989. The shares were unchanged at 150p.

UK Estate urges rebuff

UK ESTATE, the property group, yesterday urged share-holders to reject a hostile all-paper takeover bid by its rival, Ashquay. David Gradel, chairman, said Ashquay's falling share price had lowered the value of its offers to only 28.1p. "Ashquay's high gearing, soaring debts and limited cash resources make it difficult to believe that this is a credible bash for making their offers," he said. Ashquay has received around 378 per cent of IK Espain continuous 37.8 per cent of UK Estate's ordinary shares and 16.6 per cent of preference, and has extended its offers until January 9.

Claremont cautious

TOURIST

CLAREMONT GARMENTS, a clothing supplier to Marks & Spencer, said yesterday that sales in the immediate run-up to Christmas have been below expectations and that its second-half profit will be lower than last year. But it also said that pressures on margins in the clothing industry are easing after a difficult 18 months. The company, which announced two months ago that it was to close a factory in Scotland, said £7 million restructuring costs will be taken as an exceptional item in this year's accounts. The shares slid 6p to 1662 p.

Oil and Gas Development Corporation



PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT (FOREIGN WING) ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has received a loan from the International Bank For Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies towards the cost of Domestic Energy Resources Development Project (DERDP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for the procurement of various items. IFB "A" Proc-FB/WB/ICB/D-16/96:

13-3/8 OD Seamless Casing conforming to API Spec 5CT grade J-55 WT 68#ft, BTC, R-3, (Quantity 3300 Meters)

2. 9-5/8 OD Seamless Casing conforming to API Spec 5CT grade N-80, WT 43#/ft, BTC, R-3. (Quantity 9400 Meters)

IFB "B" Proc-FW/WB/ICB/WS-17/96

1. Package consisting of (i) API Bentonite (150 Metric Ton), (ii) CMC(LV) (20 M.Ton). (iii) CMC(HV) (24 M.Ton), (iv) Chrome Lignite (16 M.Ton), (v) Ferro Chrome Lignosniphoneste (20 M.Ton) (vi) Synergistic Polymer Blend (10 M.Ton) (vii) Shale Stabilizer (10 M.Ton), (viii) Non Damaging Cellosic Fibrous LCM (Fine) (15 M.Ton) (ix) Non Damaging Cellosic Fibrous LCM (Corex) (15 M.Ton), (x) Spotting Chemical (06 M. Ton) (xi) Acid Sciuble Lost Circulation Materials (10 M. Ton) (xii) Drilling Detergents (55 Gallon 10 Drums), (xiii) Mud Defoamer (xiv) Mud Lubricant (55 Gallon 10 Drums). IFB "C" Proc-FW/WB/ICB/DRM-18/96

1. Packages consisting of i) Cat Engines. (02 Nos.) ii) Mud Agitator with Jet Venturi and Shale Shaker iii) Air Winch iv) Triplex Mud Pumps unitized with Cat Engines (02 Nos.; v) Vibrators Hoses and Rotary Hoses (06 Nos.), vi) Drilling Rig Handling Tools viii Kelly Saver Subs (10 Nos.) viii) Liner Hangers (05 Nos.) ix) Casing Accessories. x)

3. The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provision of the World Bank Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Goods.

4. For further information and details, interested bidder may purchase bidding documents from the Office of Manger (Procurement). Oil and Gas Development Corporation, Markaz F-3, Islamabad Pakislan, upon written request and payment of non refundable tee of Rs 2000 for each bidding document, through Pay Order/Demand Draft

5. Biddling documents would be available for sale from 21st December 1996 and the last date for purchase of Bidding Documents is 09 January, 1997. The bids submission date is 28 January 1997 (for IFB "A"), 29 January (for IFB "B") and 30 January 1997 (for IFB

6. Bids must be delivered to the above named officer on or before 11:00 hrs on specified dates and shall be opened in the presence of bidders representatives who chose to attend, at 11 30 hours, same day at the same office.

7. Bidder must take ricte of the following mandatory requirements:-

7.1 Bid must be valid for a period of 120 days from the date of bid opening. 7.2 Bid must be accompanied by Bid Security equivalent to 2% of the total CRF bid value and it must be valid for 120 days from the date of bid opening

7.3 Price Schedule must be signed and stamped by the Bidder. 7.4 Bid Form and Price Schedule be submitted with the Bid

7.5 Bid must be bised on firm prices and not on any price adjustable formula

7.6 Bid must be prepared in English.

7.7 Bid must be submitted on or before the date and time specified to the designated

7.8 Fax bids would not be accepted.

8. Non compliance to the above mandatory requirement will be deemed to be a material deviation which will make the bid non-responsive.

Mananger (Procurement)

Symonds paying £4m for Calne Group

By OLIVER AUGUST

SYMONDS, the engineering group, is to buy Calne Group, the electronics company, for

To fund the acquisition and to strengthen its capital base, Symonds is planning a 59.6 million placing and open

The acquisition is said to enhance Symonds's test, design, manufacturing and assembly capabilities and allow the group to focus on the industrial controls and trans-

portation sectors. Rod Ackrill, the chairman of Symonds, said: "Calne will

neering to electronics. In the same period, the

group's capability within the electronics industry and enable it to continue to make

satisfactory progress. An extraordinary meeting to gain shareholder approval for the acquisition has been called for January Io.

The arrival of a new management team under Mr Ackrill in 1993 led to a restructuring of Symonds and a change of emphasis from engi-

market capitalisation of the group has increased from £2 million to more than £29 broaden and enhance the

AEA to buy **BR** Research

AEA TECHNOLOGY, the recently privatised science and engineering services group, is poised to buy British Rail Research for £10.8 million (Chris Ayres writes).

The aquisition of BR Re search, which provides consultancy, research, and engineering services, will allow AEA to satisfy overseas ambitions in the transport industry.

BR Research, which employs abour 260 people, reported pre-tax profits of £1.4 million on a turnover of £17.8 million in the year ending March 31. Net assets were £2.9 million. AEA's pre-tax operating profits were E6.4 million on a turnover of £112 million for the half year ending September 30.

Blind climber wins 'Oscar'

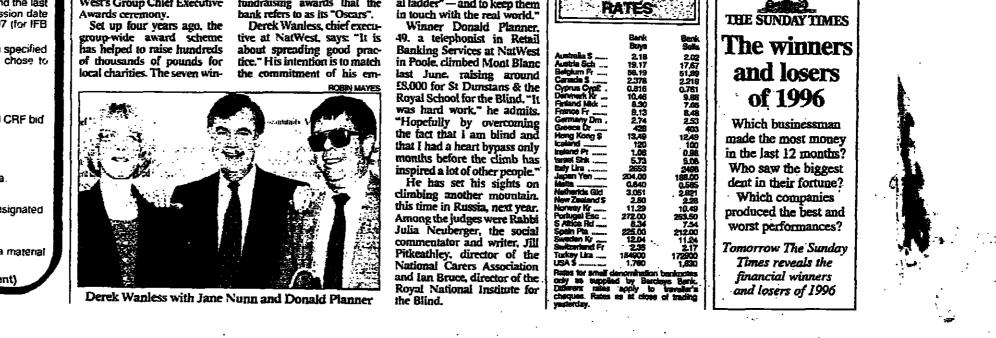
By Morag Preston

A BLIND telephonist who climbed Mont Blanc, Western Europe's highest peak, to raise money for charity and an internal audit manager who was the inspiration for raising funds for a special needs school were among the winners yesterday at Nat-West's Group Chief Executive

ners, who included Jane Nunn. an internal audit manager, received £2,000 each for their chosen charity, while the 12 finalists took £1,000 home to their voluntary organisations. All were selected from around 270 entrants who put them-selves forward for the fundraising awards that the Derek Wanless, chief execu-

ployees with cash, and to provide the fundraising proumme with the high-profile backing of a hard-nosed business approach. The benefits for the bank are twofold, he said, enabling staff to develop a diversity of business skills outside the rigid promotional ladder" — and to keep them in touch with the real world."





POUNDUP

Pierson deal

is thand popular

Sections lifes prof

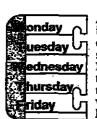
Till Blackup

...ant caution

A WORKING WEEK FOR: Sarah Elton

Smythson's far from stationary stationer

Sarah Cunningham meets a woman who has brought growth without offending the old guard



AS manag-ing director of Smyth-Elton is in the midst of

ple royal-warrant-holding stationer, the last few days before Christmas disappear in a blurof Christmas shoppers and party invitation printing.

The parties are not always the standard cocktail bash The company has produced invitations for a cat's party, and even made hand-engraved visiting cards for dogs. For those seeking gift inspiration there are more traditional goods like leather-bound books for registering fishing and hunting catches, as well as diaries, cellar books, clocks, photo albums and fine leather wallets, purses and hand bags.

Elton's working life is busy at the best of times. The company, part of the John the traditional base was to Menzies

group, has extook over as managing director three years ago. Not only have sales climbed cent increase last vear -

but the company has also moved from the small Bond Street shop it occupied since its establishment in 1887, to a much larger store down the road. Moreover, Elton has added a second Smythson store in Sloane Street, as well as a franchise in Harvey Nichols and another in

next is likely to be abroad, in New York or the Far East. At 33 years old, the tall, blonde and charming Elton is very young for her job, and her achievements are all the more remarkable if you take into account that she has had two lots of maternity leave since she took over. She now has two daughters, Harriet.

Heathrow's Terminal 4. The

two, and Elizabeth, six When she joined the company five years ago she was amazed how narrow the customer base was. "I felt like Smythson was the world's best kept secret," she says. Her biggest success, in her view, has been bringing in new

customers without losing the original base, which although declining, was very loyal and

needed to be reassured.
We've always had quite a large smattering of film stars and so on as customers, but in England we have had a lot of county people," she said. "We have to be discreet, handling invitations for very smart weddings and parties and so on. Our customers like the fact that they can trust us."

She is discreet about the identity of Smythson's customers, but drops hints: "Quite new big stars in the States come to us almost immediately, it is quite extraordinary. There is very strong word of mouth worldwide. There are also a lot of the big fashion names from Bond Street."

Most of the crowned heads of Europe, as well as our own Royals, are customers. Others reputed to use the shop include man, Jack Nicholson, Frank Sinatra and Giorgio Armani. Elton's first move away from

open the Harvey Nichols franchise: 'I thought I'd give up work immediate after children, very different

but ... I get a customer." buzz from work' carefully selected to suit the more fashion-conscious Harvey Nick's shopper. "The business was a little bit old-fashioned and we worked outte hard to

> she says diplomatically. For someone with so many demands to meet, Elton has a remarkable breeziness. Her ambition, she says, comes from an inability to cope with boredom. The word "smart" peppers her conversation, and providing smart goods for smart people and smart occasions is something she enjoys

make it more contemporary,

enormously. She is also utterly committed to the world of retailing. Her first experience came through when at school. After Exeter University, where she read history, she joined the John Lewis management training scheme, turning down possible iobs at Harrods and Aspreys because slie was unimpressed

at their interviews. After five years working in a variety of departments at John Lewis, she moved to Retail



Having helped Smythson to boost its profile, sales and number of outlets in the UK, Sarah Elton is now looking to expand overseas, probably in New York or the Far East

Solutions, a retail management consultancy. This showed her the other side of retailing: "It taught me a lot about how important the visual aspects of the job are - patterns, design, layout. These things can't be bolted on: I think you need a consistent vision about what you're doing."

Expanding Smythson without losing cachet is a difficult trick, she admits. "We are ideas, but we do have a contract with our customers to keep ourselves a little bit special and different."

The high production standards make it difficult to make dramatic increases in output, but she adds: "Having said that, we are looking overseas as the next step." New York or the Far East are likely to see the

next branch of Smythson, but not too soon. "The next step will be crucial for us, we're not going to rush it. One thing I think I have given to the company is confidence, and at the end of the day, I feel we know best."

Smythson is very small compared with some French and Italian luxury goods com-panies, like LVMH and Gucci, and it is not racing for the big time, Elton says: "With all luxury goods, the difficulty is reaching a wider market but retaining control."

What Smythson does have. which sets it apart from continental luxury goods com-panies, is a fine tradition of British craftsmanship. "Being British is important to us. We are not too loud. The story about luxury goods in the

Nineties is much more about discerning customers.

"They will not just fall for a logo, they want to know they have bought the best. We're ideally positioned for that because we are the real Mc-Coy — we have all that heritage and history and expertise. We're all content and no flash."

Although Smythson is wholly owned by John Menzies, it is run as a separate business. which is good news for Elton. "They trust me, I hope, therefore they give me a lot of freedom," she says. "They don't try to say to me we do it

Juggling work and home has not proven as hard as she had feared. The company has taken the admirable, but alltoo-rare step of allowing her to work a four-day week, and she

Now you can enjoy a year

has a nanny to look after her ten years becoming a certain young daughters when she is not around. Her husband, Graham, who is a director of Pearson Professional, is often away on business, but is extremely supportive of her

commitment to her job. Elton's sense of commitment to Smythson has surprised even her. "I'd always thought I'd give up work when I had children, but you spend

sort of person and it is very difficult to give it up. I get a buzz out of work," she says. It is hard to imagine that Elton's ambitions will not take her up and away from Smythson in the long run, but not before she has introduced

more people into the secret

world of what she proudly

calls "probably the best statio-

nery in the world".

The secret hoard seen by only a few privileged eyes

change has been fortu-nate over the centuries to have acquired a magnificent and varied collection of valuable decorative assets, most of them presented by other stock exchanges around the world or by brokers or corporate members, grateful for the Ex-change's successful handling of their assets during wars and other crises. Many of these generous donations have been in the form of highly elaborate silverware, all valuable as individual items, but as a collection

virtually priceless. These fine pieces, however. have been so well hidden one might say so effectively forgotten - that no one within this grand old institution seems to know exactly what they are, when they were given, by whom, or indeed where they might be now. This vast array of Joanna Pitman enjoys a rare glimpse of the Stock Exchange's family silver

decorative silver appears to be hidden from the remit of the in-house public relations team, from the brief of the premises manager, from other members of staff and the The collection includes piles

of solid silver salvers, a forest of candalabras, hillocks of rose bowls, loving cups, pottingers, cigar boxes, cigarette boxes, ashtrays, stone-studded chalices, medals, mustard pots, ink stands, cream jugs and enough sets of solid silver cutlery to cater for most of the population of Denmark. A strongroom, about the size of a couple of tennis courts, is stuffed with this haul of presents, which are reassessed by valuations experts from Hennells once a decade. In all, there are

thought to be "something like

200 pieces" (which does not account for an unknown number of 80-piece cutlery sets and numerous sets of

matching platters and

Apart from the Hennells men, it is only the occasional waiter who gets to see the collection when sent down to the strong room by the butler to retrieve a few of the more utilitarian items for use during special banquets. A small number of prize

pieces (about 20) are displayed in a cabinet in a dining room on the twentythird floor. Here we find some of the most elaborately worked silver and silver gilt items imaginable. There is, for example, a huge silver gilt rosewater dish made in Italy in 1600. Twenty-four inches

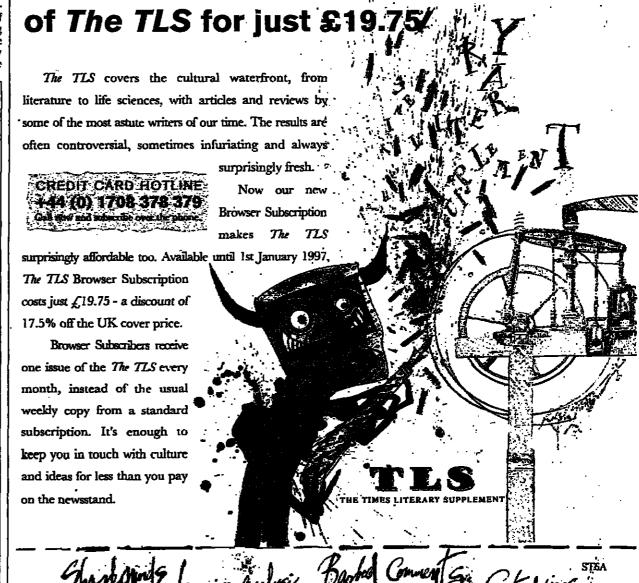
oz, it is decorated in the centre with a figure of Fame with the shield and coronet of the Italian family for whom the work was done. The rim is similarly chased with decorative figures describing events in the life of Andrea Doria, the Genoese admiral of the 16th century. The engraving on the back of the dish reads, "The Governor and Company of the Bank of England to the Chairman and Committee of The Stock Exchange in recollection of close and friendly co-opera-tion during and after the war

1914-1922. Beside this extraordinary piece sits another, larger, silver rosewater dish, 30 inches in diameter and likewise chased with an elaborate landscape scene and figures. This was presented by 16 firms to the Stock Exchange's sub-committee of the general purposes committee, appointed to deal with the crisis of 1929-1930.

In recent years the flow of gifts has ebbed, the last bumper crop being in 1986 when the Exchange hosted the twenty-fifth anniversary party of the Federation of International

Exchanges.

Given the extent and value of the pieces, which range from a Northolt Park Races Toby Cup to a large solid silver grasshopper, it is surely time for an exhibition of the whole lot. Apart from the obvious interest for the public, the Stock Exchange's own staff may learn a thing or two about what resides behind locks and chains beneath



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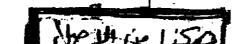
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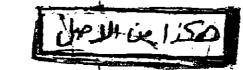
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Clare Allison with some items from the London Stock Exchange's elaborate collection







MICHAEL CLARK

Shares break records on both sides of the Atlantic

being rewritten last night as share prices continued to ride high on both sides of the

In London, equities soared to their highest levels ever, briefly reching the 4.100 level. as the pre-Christmas rally gathered pace.

This followed a 136-point leap by the Dow Jones industrial average overnight - its biggest one-day rise for nine years. However, with Wall Street showing signs of running out of steam in early trading yesterday, the FT-SE 100 index also saw earlier gains almost halved. It still finished 26.3 points up at a new closing high of 4,077.6, a rise on the week of 105.2. Once again turnover levels were bolstered by year-end window dressing by institutional investors, with 954 million

shares changing hands. Bid speculation continued to General Accident sharply higher. It added a further 10p at 760p, after briefly touching 76812p. This stretches the lead on the week to 72p. Once again there was talk about a possible bid from BAT Industries after its talks with Commercial Union, lp lower at 687p, broke down last month. BAT Industries finished 4p cheaper at 480p.

Dalgety's talks with brokers this week have borne fruit, with the price adding another

7¹2p at 361¹2p. British Steel slipped 1³4p to 16212p as a large line of shares went through the market at a discount. A total of 9.98 million were placed at 161p, a discount of 314p to the ruling market price of 16412p.

Rank Organisation slipped another 312p to 414p as brokers continued to reflect on Thursday's downbeat trading statement. GKN continued to lose ground in the wake of this week's US court ruling. The shares fell a further 17p to

992¹zp. Northern Electric firmed 4p to 64lp as the deadline CE Electric's bid of E million expired. At the count, the US power comp accounted for 33 per cent of shares. The remaining regi al electricity companies land, the subject of an or from Dominion Resource firmed 12p at 665p, w London, which earlier week agreed a bid fi Entergy, added 212p at 698



772p, Southern Electric, 512p at 77812p, Northern Ireland Electricity, 9p at 379p, National Power, 6p at 478p, PowerGen, 3p at 58lp, Scottish Power, 112p at 34612p. and Scottish Hydro 1112p at 333p.

A positive trading statement lifted English China Clays 14p to 1912p, with the group

is expected to raise a surplus above book value of £70 million.

ped 6p to 16612p after the company expressed disappointment with the pace of sales in the run-up to Christmas. The group said that sales had failed to match

New Year tipsters are already out in force and working to massage some life back into debt-laden Queens Moat. The price put in a late advance to finish 114p up, at 1634p, as 3.8 million shares were traded and word went out that the next stop for the price would be 20p. Certainly not one for widows and orphans.

talking about improved tradmargins in the second Restructuring charges would total £12 million.

Graham Group, the builders' merchant, also came in for fresh support, adding 312p at 12912p in heavy turnover that saw 1.72 million shares change hands in a thin market.

Newly merged Premier jumped 2712p to 71212p in response to the news that it has sold its Farnell Electronic Services division to

from its business review, leaving profits below those of the ing and prospects for 1997 remain good.

ceptional costs of £16 million

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	ATA
Selling pressure knocke	d 312p off Burton shares
Yorkshire Electricity, 1212p at	Arrow Electronics in the US
770 C. 41 71 4 5	

ATA	
i 312p off Burto	n shares
Arrow Electron for \$300 million	ics in the US The disposal

Claremont Garments drop-

expectations with excess costs corresponding period last Claremont maintains that margin pressures are eas-

There does not appear much cheer at SR Gent, which plunged into the red last year losses of £11 million, against a surplus last time of £6.5 million. This was after ex-

meo e for	Electronic Services division to	ceptional costs of Elb million	of the long gift put £109316 as the total
£665		 	contracts completed
last			just 22,000.
pany	MUVERS	F THE WEEK	Treasury 8 per co
f the zion-			E ⁹ 32 at £102 ³ 4, while 8 per cent 2000 was
were	Current Wee	k's	firmer at £102 ¹⁹ 32.
VLid-	Newman Tonks,, 151½p +4	9pFKI blds	□ NEW YORK: S
offer	JIB G1000136%0 +2	7½pMerges with Lloyd Thompson pProfits setback	Wall Street were
rces,	I Evecare Products 17%n -10	o Profits werning	mid-session after a
vhile this	General Accident760p +7; Burnfield141½p +4;	2pBid speculation 2pFalrey bids	opening drive steam during the r
from	Snerwood Group 44%p -14	p Second profits warting	morning. The Dow
31 zp.		7½p Gulf Canada Resources bids 6½p Buying for the dividend	dustrial average a
for			was up 14.61 points a
1.2 = 1		THE RESIDENCE OF STREET	i Britana variada
	COMMODITIES		LOND
	ICTS-LOR (London 6.00pm)	GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES	
	CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)	WHEAT BARLEY	FTSE 100
980-979	Brent Physical 24.05 -0.10 Brent IS day (Feb) 23.70 -0.10	(dose E/I) (close E/I) Jan	Previous open Interest 68625
990-999	Brent IS day (Mar) 23.10 -0.10 W Texas Intermediate (Feb) 25.15 -0.05		FTSE 250 Previous open interest: 6843
III BID	W Texas Intermediate (Mar) 24.50 -0.05	Jul	Three Month Sterling
le: 2378	PRODUCTS \$/MT)	Volume 419 Valume 63	Previous open interest. 9681
25-1220	Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)	POTATO (E/d) Open Close	Three Mth Euro Yen
30-J210 50-J200	Bid (1ffer Premium_Unld 223 (+7) 226 (+6)	Mar	Three Mth Euro DM
E 4800	Gasoil EEC 225 tn/c 225 tn/c 3.5 Fuel Oil 114 tn/c 116 tn/c	May	Previous open interest 47134
3.0-01-2	Naphtha	RUBBER (No RSS Cif p/le)	Long Gilt
1.902.0 L-01.0	IPE FUTURES (GNI LIA) GAS OIL	Jan 80.50-8 .00	Japanese Govmt Bond
7.9-04.1 ne: 561	Jan 215.00-15.25 Apr 199.25-99.50	BIFFEX (GNI Ltd \$10/pt)	Deposite Consist Scale
ME 301	Feb 213.50-14.00 May 193.25-93 50 May 207.50-08.00 Vol: 21314	High Low Close Jan 97 1440 1435 1435	German Gov Bd Bund Previous open marget, 23/69
	BRENT (6.00pm)	Feb 47 1410 1410 1413 Apr 47 1485 1480 1479	Three month ECU
ative	Feb 23.04-23.70 May	Jul 97 1215	Previous open interest 27350
Carrie	Apr 22.49 BLD Vol: (7810	Index (523 n/e	Euro Swiss Franc Previous open interest 76193
107.65 -3.14	(Official) (Volume prev day) LONDON	METAL EXCHANGE Rudolf Welff	Italian Governt Bond Previous open Interest 90501
107.18 -2.86	Copper Gde A (\$/tonne) Caste 2246 0: Lead (\$/tonne)		richous open mieres: 40001
-27.0 108.73	Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$70mme)	1039.0 (06).5-(062.0 529)25	
-5 42 +64.0	Aluminium Hi Gde (\$/top.ne) 1907 D- Nickel (\$/top.ne) 5590 O-	1507.5 1540.0- 541.0 1480725	**************************************
1020	Transit (provide)	3144	Base Rates Clearing Banks
	LIFFE OPTIONS	N. C. T. (1971) - \$20,000 (1971)	Discount Market Loans: 0 Treasury Bills (Dis):Buy: 2
	LITE OF HORS	<u>. 25 5 6 8 5 5 10 </u>	B B B B
ets Jed	Calls Puts Series Jan Apr Jul Jan Apr Jul	Calls Pars Series Apr Jul Oct Apr Jul Oct	Prime Bank Bills (Dist: Sterling Money Rates:
	BAA 460 27', 40', 48'; 1'; 8'; 14		Interbanic Overnight: open 5 close 5'
42°;	(*494) 900 4'. 18 29. 18'. 26 12 Thames W. 600 18 37 47 7 19'. 35'-	Abby Nat 700 68 79 847 20 25° 35 (748): 750 37 457 57, 42, 487 58 Amstrad (40	Local Authority Deps:
, 11'1 ', 12	Pe07'4) 690 3 15 23': 43 48': 66	(ang 160 Bardays 950 69 83: 95': 24 12 42	Sterling CDs Dollar CDs:
317	Series FebMay Aug FebMay Aug	17994 1000 391 591 69 45 551 ch Nati Pay 450 44 - 10 -	Building Society CDs:
, 20 , 21	BTR 240 18', 23 27 4', 10', 13	(*4774 500 18°, 27°, 30° 33° 46°; 51°;	TREASURY BILLS: Apple Last week: E99.50% received
· 11. (C22114 280 7: 12: 17: 14 21 27: 87 Aero 1150 811: 100: 125 13'. 30': 34'.	Series Jan Apr Jul Jan Apr Jul	£200mi.
': Z4Ր: 🖠	(*1204) 1200 44 75 % 20 51 55	Glasso W 900 52 77: 87: 57: 27 36: 1742 950 20: 44: 60: 23 50 60	EIROPE
2	Br Telcon 390 (4', 24 30', 12 17 30') (**399)	HSBC 1250 514 845 110 142 52 70 (TL252) 1300 24 565 84 37 785 95	EUROPE
1 341- 2 601-	Cadimry 480 37, 39, 45 3 11 15 r486) 500 10, 17 25 19 30, 36,	Reuter 700 42' of 75 3', 18', 26	Сагтелсу
· 33	Guingers 430 37: 45: 49 2 8: 12 (453) 460 13 20: 26: 15: 26: 30:	(737) 750 (2) 32 48 22 415 485 Royal & Sun 431 23 36 — 4 20 —	Della:
, <u>ii</u> ,	GEC 360 27 364 41 4 7: 15	(448) 44 41 34	Deutschemark: 3

 _	Mar AN 20-0500 VOI: 2 314	Jan 47	1440	1433 1433
	DDD-D-44-40	Feb 47	1410	1410 1413
MEAT & LIVESTOCK	BRENT (6.00pm)	Apr 97	1485	1480 1479
COMMISSION	Feb 23.69-23.70 May n/a	Jul 97	1215	1215 1215
	Feb 23.69-23.70 May 11/2			
Average tatstock prices at representative	Mar 23.10-23.11 Jun	Vol: 57 lots		pen Interest 1805
markets on December 19	Apr 22.49 BLD Vol: (7810	i	index (5,23 r	1/6
(p/kg lw) Pig Sheep Cattle	· -			
GB: 88 19 143.23 107.65				
	(Official) (Volume prev day) LONDON	METAL EXC	HANCE	Redolf Welf
(+/-) •0 12 • [0.59 -3.14				
Eng/Wales: 89.20 144.34 107.18	Copper Gde A (\$/topne) Casts 2246 0-	2247JJ 3000Bc;	2148.0-2149.0	7 Vol: 1546300
(v/-)0.07 •11.41 -2.86	Lead (Stround)	704.00	707.00-707.50	
(%)	Zinc Spec Hi Gde (\$710mme) 1039.5-		(06) 5-(0620	
Scottland: 86.35 134.38 108.75	Tin (\$110mse)	5734.0	5765.0-5770.0	3 [41,20
(+1+)4 <u>1</u> 92 +9.09 -5.92	Aluminium Hi Gde (\$/top.net 1907.0-	1507.5	1540.0-1541.0	
(%)			4700 G-6701 G	
(3)	Nickel (\$1000c)		TOTAL COLUMN	, ,,,,,,,,,,
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	LIFFE OPTIONS			- 1
				
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C 8 74 460 23 79 48 49: 139: 22	Br Telcon 390 (41, 24 307, 12 17 30	F42 95	0 20% 44% (യ: 23 20 60
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Zeneca 1600 62: 107 139 22: 60 834.	Williams 330			
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rnd Met 420 37 43 50 4 10 14				-
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and Blac 200 16 204 21 3 8. 104		מצב הלביו	11 175 2	Th 17: 16 22
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SILM COLUMN 19 19 17 411	140 15'1 25 40'1 b3 94 133'1			0', 16 21', 26 '.
THE REAL CRIP LANCE	Feb 35% 47 65 85% 112% 146%	(*L32".) 460		3. 41 45, 49.
ecember 20. 1996 Tot: 94624 Call: 44002		Scot Per 323	27';	- 6',
at 28622 FTSE Call: 19603 Pat 6779		F346I 353		
Inderiving security price.	Jun - 118': - 159 - 208': 1	· PRO 273		- 21 ~
concession second bear				

after the closure of Clothi	ne
Barn. Margins continue	tn
suffer. The shares rose 2p	10
soller. The shares rose ap	w
59 ¹ 2p.	

The news from Claremoni and Gent left two of their biggest customers nursing sixable falls. Next fell 712p to 54412p and Marks & Spencer 1112p to 47212p. Coats Viyella, which issued a profits warning earlier in the week, rallied 112p to 127p.

Elsewhere among the retail-ers, Burton eased 312p to 151p as a line of 7.3 million shares were placed at 15012p. Castle Mill, another textiles

group, was steady at 334p after announcing reduced losses in the first six months of the year. Aquarius Group, the furnishings group, made a positive start in first-time dealings, opening at 172¹2p, against a placing price of 166p. The shares later dipped to 170¹2p before recovering to end at 17212p, a premium of 612p.

Over on Olex, Sardis International started trading at Hp after a placing at 10p by Griffiths & Lamb, the broker. The group's sound system is used in theme park simulator

The breakdown in bid talks with Panther Securities left Exmoor Dual Investment Trust 1120 lower at 120.

It looks like being a merry Christmas for Toy Options. which is expected to benefit from booming sales of Buzz Lightyear dolls this year. However, after touching 10712p, the shares closed all square at 103120. GILT-EDGÉD: There was

a further flattening of the yield curve as the London market took its lead from firmer German bunds to extend this week's gains. Once again, the best im-

provements were seen at the longer end, while prices among shorter-dated coupons were held back by persistent interest rate worries. In futures, the March series

of the long gilt put on E's at £109316 as the total number of contracts completed reached Treasury 8 per cent put on E932 at £10234, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was just a tick

firmer at £1021932. Wall Street were mixed at mid-session after a powerful opening drive steadily lost steam during the rest of the morning. The Dow Jones industrial average at midday was up 14.61 points at 6.488.25.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday): Amsterdam: Frankfurt 2278.53 (+29.83) Zurich: London: FT 30 __ FT 100 . FTSE Mid 250 4448.4 (+41.6)
FTSE 350 2021.7 (+14.3)
FTSE Eurotrack 100 1888.23 (+23.13)

FT All-ShareFT Non Financials . 1993.71 (+13.86 . 2074.31 (+13.66) 116.39 (+0.22) , 94.31 (+0.28) 1,6668 (+0.0038) 2,5899 (+0.0039) Jerman Mark RPI ____ 153.9 Nov (2.7%) Jan 1987=100 RPIX ___ 153.7 Nov (3.3%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Advanced Power Cm	82	- 4
Aquarius	17212	
Archer Dedicated	100	
BZW Endowment Re	d 55%	+ 21
Cadcentre	240'2	+ 3
Colt Telecom (275)	286	+ 4"
Crown Leisure	812	+ 1
Dawn Til Dusk	1215	
Finsbury Intl Hedge	615	+ 25
Fountain Forestry	841,	
Henderson Tech C	344	+ 81
Highams Systems	11612	+ 3
Kern River	50½	
Kler Group	1872	+ 2
Linden	1641:	
Netcali	40%	
Oliver Ashworth	1354	
On-Line	10242	
Oxford Biomedica	694	+ 5
Parkwood Holdings	79'1	- 4
Pilat Technologies	55½	
Provend (125)	137 ¹ :	
SDX Business Sys	[70 ¹ 2	
Scot Highland Hils	1381,	+ I
Semple Cochrane	242¹:	+ 10
xenova	2164:	
Yeoman Group	15912	+ 2
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De La Rue ...

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FALLS:

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| Limelight | 177':p (-| Limelight | 992':p (-| GKN | 992':p (-| Barclays | 994p (-| GUS | 623p (Closing Prices Page 32

J	N FINAI	YCIAL	.FUT	UHES			П
	Period	Орел	High	Low	Sett	Vol	l
	Dec %	4095.0	4100.0	4071.0	4078,0	8345	Lí
	Mar 97 .	4111.0	4115.0	40620	4078,0	7779	L
	Dec 96				4146.0	0	1
	Mar 97 _	450,1.0	4903.0	4503.D	4503,0	9] ;
	Mar 97	93,28	93.30	93.27	93,29	9770	1
5	154 G	93,04	93.06	93.03	43,04	2493	ľi
	Sep 97 _	92.55	92.98	VC.84	92.85	3435	li
	Jøn 97 _	99,42	99.42	90.42	99,42	.150	1 :
	243 AL -	99,31	99.32	99,31	99_31	201	. ;
	Mar 97	96.56	96 87	96 9 <u>6</u>	96.87	13254	i
9	Jun 97	9 <u>6</u> E3	96.83	96.76	96.81	5351	!
	Dec 96	110-02	110-04	110-01	110-00	199	3
3	Mar 9?	19 9- 10	100-13	1000	109-06	21461	
	Mar 97 _	13502	126.20	125.02	125.14	699	3
	100 dt =	1.44.67	124 72	12467	24.74	90	۱.
	おおせて二	100.58	100.73	100.38	100.48	67211	
5	2±1 क				99.50	0	ĮŁ
	Mu C	95.95	95.96	95.95	Q5,Qg	532	١,
	122 00 -	95.06	95.98	95.98	95.98	125	1
	MX 97	98.(0	98.11	98.05	95.10	4367	<u> </u>
	Jun 57	98.02	98.03	97.93	98.02	30001	1

Previous open unterest 1.6	-58 N.11'4	C _ 199-	10 104-[3	mag.	103-00	21461
Japanese Govmt Bon			02 126-20	125.02	125.14	699
•	Jun 9	124.	67 124 72	124.67	124.74	90
German Gov Bo Bun		T_ 100.	58 100.73	100.38	100.48	67211
Previous open interest. 2016	98 J.17	7			99.50	0
Three month ECU	3437.9	r_ 95	95 95 96	95.95	95,99	532
Previous open Interest 2735	ರ ಸಚಿತ್ರಗಳ	7 - 951	95,98	95.98	95,98	125
Euro Swiss Franc	Mar 9	7 98.	(0 98.1)	98.05	98.10	4347
Previous open interest 7619	שו מונו פי	7 _ 98	02 98.03	97,93	98.02	3098
Italian Govrat Bond	Mar 9		05 129.15	128 45	128.60	15964
Previous open Interest 9050	1 1959	7 _ 128.5	90 129,50	128.50	128.12	90
	HOME	VDAT	ES (%)		-	900
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Base Rates Clearing Ban						
		unce Hise 6	Low 5's		Week (1x	-4 50
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Taken to the wire

NORTHERN'S battles for independence have been spirited. Its defence against Trafalgar House brought shareholder returns in surprising abundance.

Certainly they were surprising for the electricity regulator, who, only a few weeks earlier, had supposedly delivered a review to clamp down on power prices. Northern's delivery of £550 million of goodies forced the regulator to redo his sums.

Northern's scorched earth defence made its garden look potentially so unattractive that another suitor seemed unlikely. At the height of the takeover sweeps that have gripped the industry. Northern has continually seemed the wallflower.

But then came CE Electric, led CalEnergy, a company for which high debt levels were not necessarily fearsome. Offering

what it considered a reasonable and affordable price, it weighed in with a bid. Northern said that the overtures were too

cheap. CE Electric upped the price, but Northern fought on, raiding its cupboards for fresh delights to serve up to investors. Admittedly the sweetie store was suffering a

little after such an enormous raid to fend off Trafalgar. But Northern still managed a package that lifted the dividend by 17 per cent and promised a yield of 10 per cent.

CalEnergy has mounted its takeover on a ticket of cash now, rather than promises later. Many investors have been torn until the last minute on this offer. The extension of the announcement until midnight was a clear sign that things were close. Northern has relied heavily on projections, but no one can fault it for it ability to produce shareholder benefits.

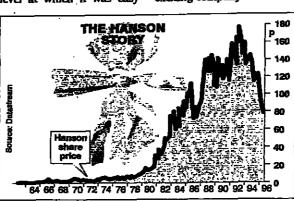
enough to digest the unfortuuncertain regulatory outlook for electricity and continuing difficult conditions in the nate prey.

Excitement also followed a

building industry. Hanson shares, however. were for almost the entire duration of the chart excited by the prospects of the next big deal. Market excitement usually raised the price earnings ratio of Hanson to a level at which it was easy

Hanson deal as the market gasped at the prices Hanson obtained for breaking up the unwanted bits of its target.

But without the deals there is no excitement and without the excitement the rating has dived. A sad end to a once exciting company.



Amec

Hanson

THE chart tells the story of

the Hanson conglomerate.

from its first listing to the

Hanson once again this

week railed against the mar-

ket for undervaluing Han-

son and the already demerged US Industries, Imperial Tobacco and Mil-lennium Chemicals. The En-

ergy Group, consisting of

Peabody, the US coal group,

and Eastern, the British electricity company, is to be demerged in early 1997. Ex-pect details soon.

In January the sum of the

parts was around 207p, but

when Lord Hanson did his

calculations on December 2

for the annual report he

reckoned the figure stood at

150p.
There are a variety of

explanations, such as the

It also explains why Lord

recent series of demerge

FOR a company that has built a fair few of them. Kvaerner would seem to have missed the boat on Amec. For much of the autumn, the Amec share price was ahead of the El or so that ent stake in the ut Kvaerner has The presence of hang is holding are price back. ins yesterday's

having the right ny loose shares ployees and to he rest outright at by independent the end of 2002. between builders ancing of margins werlapping work-

FISE VOLUMES

ialist expertise into Spie's operations. The merged busi-ness will have turnover approaching £5 billion and profits in the range of £40 million to £50 million, to go on City estimates and a forecast to employees from Spie. The minority stake will have to be equity-accounted by Amec, and, on the City's numbers, it represents a 25 per cent earnings enhance-ment in the first full year. It also represents a sensible way forward for a contractor too reliant on the difficult British market. However, two doubts remain. French-British mergers have a poor record - and that Kvaerner stake is still there.

Meconic

MECONIC is the country's only legal supplier of controlled drugs such as cocaine, methadone and a variety of

such as codeine have become increasingly available over the counter. This buoyancy has enabled Meconic to ride a decline in opiate product margins resulting from a poor poppy harvest. The company is all too aware that its monopoly supplier position is a privilege and decided that interests are better served by swallowing some of the short-term costs of a raw material price rise

Meconic has also diversified, adding Phoenix, which provides contract chemicals to drug companies. Phoenix has also given Meconic access to vital markets, such as the US, from which the company was previously excluded by international regulations on exports of controlled drugs.

The company's success and good growth prospects have been fully recognised, with the shares now nearly £2 above their 1995 float pricing out not in this case. poses. The company has been have developed the Meconic heart, a way of inable to grow rapidly in the habit will probably want to

ec's areas of spec- past few years as painkillers stick with the company. WALL STREET DOLLAR RATES

INID



PENSIONS 27

Don't miss the bus in the retirement race

WEEKEND

CREDIT CARDS 28

How to avoid the costly debt hangover



MES PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

New year greetings for the Halifax savers

Anne Ashworth and Caroline

Merrell report on the latest

moves by building societies on

the rocky road to conversion

our million berrowers and savers this week feared for their new year windfalls, after the announcement that the Woolwich had joined the militant Alliance & Leicester in the struggle to amend the Building

Both societies oppose the proposal to remove the fiveyear takeover protective ring that currently encircles any society launching itself on the stock market.

This shield against predators will be lost if the society itself becomes an aggressor. So strong were the objections of the Alliance & Leicester to this provision that it threatened last month to postpone its conversion which will spread £1,000 average payouts among

The Woolwich said this week ing societies would not be safeguarded, it would have taken a longer route to conversion, making takeovers before its market debut.

Woolwich and A&L members' should not despair because both societies are proceeding, as before, towards conversion and it seems that neither will abandon its plans purely because they may be left

vulnerable to aggressors. There have been rumours that the A&L was rethinking its April stock market launch as it was likely to coincide with a general election. But as the membership has voted in fayour of conversion the process

 $g_{\alpha}(\overline{q}_{\alpha}) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{m_{\alpha}^{\alpha}(\overline{q}_{\alpha}^{\alpha})}{2} \frac{\overline{q}^{\alpha}}{2}$

must go ahead. Savers and borrowers with Halifax and Northern Rock, the two other societies floating next year, need have no trepidation. Halifax members can look forward to getting the full details of their share payout within weeks, more than two

nounced. The Halifax has already waived its right to protection, partly because it wishes to pursue takeovers, while the Northern Rock says that it has no intentions of

This week the Halifax revealed that the cost of merging with the Leeds and becoming a bank would be some £413 million, with some £153 million of this being spent on communicating with members. The distribution of voting packs being sent to nine million qualifying members early next month will by itself set the society back to the tune of £10 million to £20 million.

ith eight printing Those who love a statistic will be interested to learn that if the were laid side by side they would cover 160,000 miles ~ five times the circumference of

the world. The aim of this operation is to ensure that members cast their votes for or against the conversion. The result of the poll will be known at the special general meeting to be held in February. The society expects to be a quoted com-

will have a similar market capitalisation to Prudential, HSBC, GEC and BTR. Halifax shares should be much sought after, especially as it will join the FT-SE 100 index of leading shares. But it became clear this week that Halifax members

bidding for anyone.

companies inpages of all the documents

pany and a bank by June. When floated the Halifax

killing on their shares could be disappointed if a proposal to delay the its fast-track entry into the index goes ahead.

The FT-SE Actuaries UK Indices Committee, which compiles the FT-SE 100 and FT-SE all-share indices, is concerned that the Halifax is not making any of the £10 billion of shares it is issuing available to institutional investors in the City. It says fund managers will be forced to scrabble after the few shares sold immediately by Halifax members. The committee believes that the shares could become overvalued, causing a distortion in the market and is proposing a two or three-week delay to enable the City to buy the shares in a more orderly

This could depress prices for

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth exchange their shares for cash straight away.

Tracker funds - which automatically buy all stocks in the FT-SE 100 - would avoid buying Halifax, it is argued, leaving the price to plummet as an estimated 900,000 members sold out

☐ Members of the societies changing their status in 1997

— Bristol & West, Halifax, Northern Rock and Woolwich - should not forget, amid the Christmas and new year festivities, that they must have at least £100 in their accounts on December 31, 1996, or lose their entitle-

ment to free shares.

Those Bristol & West, Halifax and Woolwich savers who stand to qualify for the additional variable distribution of shares being made by these societies must top up their accounts to the level that they were at, at the first qualifying date.

INVESTORS OFFERED CASH OR UNITS

N early all the 90,000 investors in the three trusts suspended by Morgan Grenfell at the end of August will get some form of compensation for the losses caused by the irregularities in the funds.

Anyone with investments in the Morgan Grenfell European Growth trust, the Europa fund and the European Capital Growth fund between August 1, 1995, and September 5, 1996, will be offered compensation in cash or extra units. It is expected that it will be paid by April. Investors will also receive 6 per cent interest, dating from September 5, 1995.

The three funds were suspended because they had breached the regulatory limits on unquoted companies.

The level of compensation will be set in relation to a special European index of funds constructed by Micropal, the fund performance company. Unfortunately, Morgan Grenfell had failed to alert the

company yesterday that it was releasing details of the compensation package - so

the data on the index was not available. However, similar data from another company. HSW, could give a guide to the level of compensation. For instance, £1,000 invested in the Morgan Grenfell Europe Growth trust at August I, 1995, would have been worth £958 on September 5, 1996, a fall of 4.19 per cent. An index of European companies moved up 12 per cent over that period. An investor would, therefore, get about £162 for every £1,000 invested.

The thousands of investors who put their personal equity plan money into this fund at the end of the tax year will get even more compensation. A full £6,000 invested on March 15 would have been worth £4.800 at September 5 — a fall of 20 per cent. The index moved up by about 1 per cent over that period, so investors could get around \$1260. Comment, page 27

Good value beats a bargain

The easiest investment opportuni-ty of 1996 was to have the right deposit in the right building society at the right time. In the long run, however, investing is no more about collecting windfalls than tax policy should be. One useful lesson of 1996 is that even beating pretty average sort of averages is not so easy.

Over the past 12 months, the FT-SE 100 index of leading UK shares has risen about 13 per cent. With added dividends of 4 per cent, that gave a better return than most analysts expected a year ago and better than the average annual return looked for by pension fund actuaries. But virtually all the gains came between July and October as it became clear that the British economy was belatedly picking up again and that world interest rates would not push ours higher.

Within the overall average, there were the usual winners and losers. This year banks boomed, brewers drooped and gold mines lost all their early rises as inflation stayed at bay. Investors who tracked the London share market average should be content. Seemingly brighter prospects disappointed.

Government gilt-edged stocks have fallen a touch over 12 months, so earning twice as much income did not compensate. But the second half was stronger, in line with sterling. If you put your money in overseas markets, however, the improving pound spoilt re-turns in terms of what they will buy at home. That is a snag more familar to Japanese investors than British, who are used to currency gains overseas.



Partly as a result, the average investment trust had a relatively poor year. To the surprise of many non-American sceptics, the Dow Jones industrial average has risen by more than a quarter, twice as fast as the FT-SE 100. In essence, the American economy and big companies continued to grow healthily yet avoided rising short-term interest rates. The sceptics were proved wrong and, although some sharp cor-rection is still likely after two gung ho years of rising share prices, predictions of a crash begin to look like sour grapes.

Measured in end-1996 sterling, how-ever, those who missed Wall Street's latest rise missed nothing. Returns are a shade less than an index-tracking UK fund should have achieved. Much the same applies to continental investment, even for those not entangled in the Morgan Grenfell mess. Sterling investors would, on average, have lost a fifth of their money in Japanese shares and even buoyant Hong Kong did not beat markets had a poor year, in part because US investors preferred Wall Street. Even Templeton Emerging Markets trust, a long term global winner, could not match the FT-SE 100.

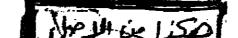
Many UK private investors will look enviously at the average too. Several of the 100 shares that make up that index were real dogs in 1996. Even worse. most of these were among the most popular shares. For instance, British Gas, the second most widely held company in Britain, lost 30 per cent of its stock market value.

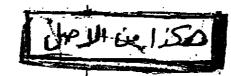
any of us were buying the wrong new investments too.

A list of the ten most popular share purchases by private investors through Fidelity Brokerage Services last year makes a good case for switching to unit trusts. It included four notable 1996 losers: Hanson, British Gas again, Tadpole Technology and BTR. Eurotunnel was not a star; Glaxo Wellcome and BT were sub-average. Only Asda and National Power shone. The odd one out was Trafalgar House. If you bought last December, a rescue bid would have doubled your money by spring. But most 1995 bargain-hunters

had their fingers burnt. The best guide to long-term share picking is to search for good value. But value and apparent cheapness are not the same. Too many of us, it seems. approach the stock market like the January sales, eager to pounce on famous name brands selling at half price. The goods are usually faulty.







Pep security guaranteed — just like that

Limited-risk plans may appeal, but

there are drawbacks, Gavin Lumsden says

B anks and fund managers are proving once again that they are magicians with lots of tricks up their sleeves.

With stock markets continuing their impressive yo-yo imperson-ations, amid gloomy forecasts of low growth next year, you would expect the average investment industry wizard to be a bit depressed. Not a bit of it. The latest wheeze to beguile investors is the so-called "guaranteed", or limited-risk, personal equity plan (Pep), which provides capital

security, but not a lot else.

This week Barclays launched the second tranche of its Guaranteed Pep, and HSBC Asset Management. sister company to the Midland, announced it had raised £53.6 million for UK Equity Plus 3, its third limited-risk Pep from Dublin. NatWest, Scottish Widows, Edinburgh Fund Managers, John Govett

and even Marks & Spencer are

already in the market and Legal &

General. Save & Prosper and Commercial Union have all got development teams working on a product.

Broadly speaking, the new breed of Peps offer one of two guarantees. The first will provide 100 per cent capital security if you keep the Pep for a fixed period, usually five years.

The second guarantee, known as the protected floor approach, is more flexible as it regularly sets a limit below which the fund cannot fall, no matter what happens to the market. A typical level is 98 per cent a quarter, or 95 per cent a year. This is appealing because it locks in growth and protects it from future falls. It is particularly useful if you are planning to take your money out when the market has just dropped. as it did two weeks ago

Although superficially simple, guaranteed Peps rely on complex bets on the FT-SE 100 index using expensive derivative instruments. Up to 5 per cent of their assets can be



Fund managers are like magicians with tricks up their sleeves

tied up in derivatives, missing out on the full return from equities. Worse still, many miss out on the dividends companies pay shareholders. This income constitutes 30 per cent of the total return of the

Take the Barclays Guaranteed Pep, which operates the first type of

guarantee. It invests in a unit trust that gets capital and income growth by tracking the FT-SE 100 index of the top 100 companies in the UK. If at the end of five years your invest-ment has fallen, the bank promises to make up the difference. If the

index grows, you get all the growth.

Cannot lose? Consider this, If you

automatically lose a massive 12.2 per cent of your capital in charges. In addition to a 5 per cent bid/offer spread, the bank levies a I per cent unit trust fee, a 1.2 per cent guarantee charge, and, worst of all, a 5 per cent withdrawal fee. This latter charge stays at 5 per cent in the second year, 3 per cent in years three and four and drops to 1 per cent in

Barclays emphasises that the Pen is designed to be a five-year investment and says the withdrawal charge simply covers the cost of the future and options deals it has written to underpin the guarantee.

In contrast, Marks & Spencer's Guaranteed Capital Investment Plan, which also tracks the FT-SE 100, offers a money-back guarantee and is due to be reissued in Febru-ary, is more cost-effective with no

these charges mean it will underperform the index by 2.5 per cent a year.
In the second camp we have another example of an FT-SE track-er, the Govett UK Equity Safeguard Pep. By protecting 98 per cent of the assets each quarter and adjusting the floor, this Pep could produce a

initial charge, a 1 per cent annual

management charge and a 1.5 per cent guarantee fee. Nevertheless,

Marks & Spencer. However, unlike the other two, the Govett Pep receives only capital growth from the index. Charges are 5.5 per cent initial and 1.25 per cent annual. NatWest also offers a Pepable

Safeguard unit trust, although it is rebased annually and invests 30 per cent in international equities for diversification. Every June 1 it sets a protected floor price at 95 per cent of the selling price of the fund's units ' on that day. If the unit price rises by more than 10 per cent, the floor is immediately reset.

The advantage of NatWest's approach is that the most an investor can lose in a year is 5 per cent, whereas with the Govett Pep, total losses for a year are potentially 8 (4x2) per cent. However, the UK stock market has fallen continuously for a year only once in the past 50 years. Rebasing once a year costs less in derivatives deals as well.

The minimum investment in the fund is £1,000 lump sum or £50 per month. There is an initial charge of 4.25 per cent and an annual management fee of 1.5 per cent.

Edinburgh Fund Managers' Safety First fund also protects 95 per cent of the fund on an annual basis. It charges 3.5 per cent initial and 1.25 per cent annual and a 1 per cent exit better return than Barclays or charge in the first year.

THE biggest problem with guaranteed products is that you could end up doing worse than if you had just left your money on deposit Take HSBC's Equity Plus 3. It offered capital security plus a minimum of 18 per cent capital growth over five years. This works out at an annual rate of 3.36 per cent, which HSBC admits is bettered by the building socieites, although it rightly points out that the potential for further growth is unlimited. However, once again this upside is linked to capital growth in the FT-SE only. As Mark Dampier, director of Churchill Investments, near Bristol, says: "There is no one product which will solve all vestors' needs. If people want growth from the stock market out want to protect themselves against risk, they should seek

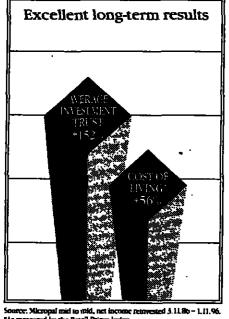
between cash, gilts and equities." The price of both kinds of protection can also include high charges and an investment performance a third less than from a non-guaranteed Pep.

advice on how to construct a

simple portfolio divided

Caroline Merrell on new offers to boost a growing army of child investors

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young can really add up When the joy of this

Saving when

are always appealing.
When the joy of this year's Buzz Lightyear doll has faded, cash will still keep its

A report published earlier this month by the NOP, the market research group, shows that young people form early links with banks and building societies. More than 50 per cent of children in Britain between the ages of seven and nine, now have an account with a bank or building society, with 13 per cent of all respondents having two or

National Savings, banks and building societies all offer special savings plans for children. Children Bonus Bonds pay a tax-free fixed rate 6.75 per cent if held for five years. Minimum investment is £25. With E20 you can open an Investment Account which pays 4.75 per cent. One month's notice is needed for withdrawals, ensuring that curb their retail urges.

Moneyfacts, the savings information specialist, recommends a number of children's accounts, including the Halifax Building Society's Little Xtra/Quest. This instant access account has a 3.1 per cent interest rate with a minimum carrier and magazine. Another recommended account is from the Nationwide Building Society. This instant access account pays 3.4 per cent and offers goodies such as a compact disc, magazine and welcome pack.

Other less well known societies that offer better rates of interest include the Chorley & District, Darlington, Harpen-den and Leeds & Holbeck. For instance, the Chorley & District offers an instant access account with 5.95 per cent interest. Darlington's Foundation instant access account offers an interest rate of 5.75 per cent, while Harpenden Building Society offers the 18 Club account which has a minimum investment of £5. The interest here is 6 per cent. but no withdrawals are permitted until the accountholder reaches 18 years of age. The Leeds & Holbeck Building account which has a minimum investment of £1,000 and offers 6 per cent interest.

The highest interest rate is offered by the tiny Melton Mowbray Building Society. Its Sunny Bond, which has a 30day term of notice, offers 6.5



Children become model savers with the right train of thought

Go East and West for the bargains

f you are thinking of spending the £L000 bounty from the flotation of your building society early, a shopping trip to a distant destination might be worth considering. The strength of sterling means that goods bought in foreign climes will be cheaper, and

shopping in a new city can be a novelty. However, the price of standard air fares at this time of year increase, so any savings could be wiped out. The British Airways return fair to New York, for instance, rockets to £648. However, with the dollar standing at about \$1.61, a shopping in the heart of the city, houses hundreds dollar standing at about \$1.61, a shopping trip to delve into the delights of Saks of Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdales, and Tiffa-

nys could prove attractive. Shopping in the US can also bring rich pickings in the form of cheap electronic goods - such as compact discs and tapes - and cheap

clothes and designer brands. Those who want to shop a little closer to home could opt to fly to Paris for £91. However, those looking for a bargain

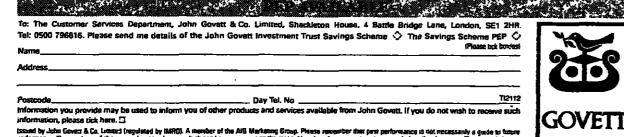
should wait for the new year sales. Another favoured destination is Istanbul in Turkey. The Turkish lira is currently trading at a staggering 168,484 of stalls selling copper, leather and rugs. Winter is low season — so it could be the

moment to try to get a bargain. Haggling over the price is also in order.

A return British Airways flight to Prague, in the Czech Republic, will cost about £219. Favoured goods are Bohemian crystal, second-hand books and mem-

For the truly bargain conscious, the ten-hour flight to Bangkok could be worthwhile. A British Airways fare could cost between £739 and £1,244. The keen shopper can get cheap clothing, gems and antiques from the Wat Mahathat's market and Khao Sam road.

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Don't miss the bus in the pension race

Personal pension holders could miss out on thousands of pounds of pounds of pounds of retirement income because the investment strategy of their life office is "woolly and underdeveloped" it was claimed this week. In many cases, they would have been better off buying a pension from a big investment house with clearer investment and stock-picking goals. The report, published by Bacon & Woodrow, the consultant, suggests that many life offices are so uncompetitive and inefficient that they will simply disappear.

B&W estimates that the number of companies selling personal pensions will fall from almost 100 to about 12 by the year 2000.

B&W found institutional managers produced far better returns than those achieved by many life offices that lacked "measurable objectives". Andrew Warwick-Thompson, who compiled the survey, said that the average institutional managed fund outperformed its retail counterpart by 1.8 per cent a year over the past

five years.
He added: 'The best retail managers can compete head to head with their institutional counterparts, but many investors in personal pensions run the risk of lower long-term returns which will depress their retirement income. The big investment houses — among them Mercury. Schroders, Morgan Grenfell, Gartmore and PDFM — are starting to challenge the traditional province of the life offices. Most independent financial advisers and personal pension investors are not sufficiently demanding of retail managers."

B&W sees the real problem for private investors as the dearth of good statistical information that would enable them to make choices about the funds to buy.

Figures showing simple accumulated returns did not paint the whole picture because the investor needed to know how risky the fund was in does the fund have to meet to merit comparison to others in the sector, and whether the returns would have been greater if money had been put into the fund at various times during

Mr Warwick-Thompson said some life offices described their investment strategy as aiming to achieve "aboveaverage performance with the minimum of risk over the long term".

"Investors should be asking, what is the long term and how many years? How risky is the fund compared to its peers, and what criteria



BACON & Woodrow claimed that the majority of published research lacked analytical sophistication and suggested investors should ask these basic ovestions of fund managers: What is the fund's objective? Is this objective measurable? Against what is it measured?

☐ Has the fund met its objective in the past? ☐ Does the manager have welldefined and robust asset allocation and stock selection

☐ Can the manager attribute the added value of each stage of his investment processes to his

fund's performance?
Mr Warwick-Thompson said some of the traditional life offices had problems defining what their investment objectives were. "We asked these questions of the funds we surveyed. The retail managers, with some exceptions, were inefficient and did not know what they were trying to achieve."

the description 'above average?" B&W has drawn up a shortlist of pension fund managers that it rates highly, but, unfortunately for investors, it does not reveal which these companies are.

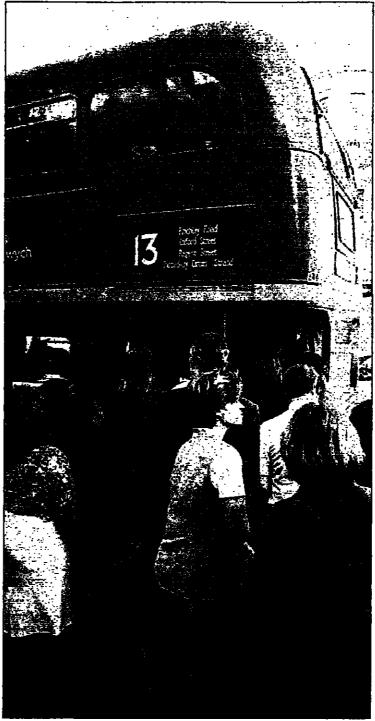
However, of the 308 funds analysed, only 27 met B&W's strict criteria. Among the providers were Norwich Union and Standard Life, which were both singled out for special praise by B&W last year.

Funds were excluded if they had poor performance, were closed to new business, had less than £20 million under management (which was considered to be too small to be successful in the competitive life sector) and were not available through independent financial advisers on a nil commission basis.

The providers that made it through

this screening process are listed below. However, a provider may have one fund that was outstanding and others that performed less well. The successful providers were Abbey Life; Allied Dunbar; AXA Equity & Law; Clerical Medical; Commercial Union; Friends Provident; General Accident; Gan Fidelity, Perpetual and Stewart Ivory; Gartmore; Guardian; Legal & General; Lincoln National's Schroders, Managed 3 and Managed 4 funds; London & Manchester's Ex Balanced and Ex Flexible; M&G Pension Managed; Mercury International and Portfolio: National Mutual; Norwich Union; NPI; Old Mutual; Prudential Holborn Managed and Prudential MPP Discretionary: Scottish Life; Scottish Mutual and Scottish Provident; Skandia's Fidelity, Gartmore, Perpetual, Morgan Grenfell and Balanced managed funds; Standard Life, Sun Alliance (now Royal & Sun Alliance) and Sun Life.

Mr Warwick-Thompson said life offices in the future might be forced to contract out funds to investment houses to improve their performance.



Everyone wants to board the best vehicle for retirement funds

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH Personal Finance

Morgan Grenfell investors owe thanks to Imro

organ Grenfeli could have used V 1 the announcement of compensation for the 90,000 hapless investors in its European funds as an opportunity to salvage its reputation. However, the group's unimpressive conduct suggests that it has failed to learn from its mistakes and seems not to realise how profoundly the episode has damaged its

Yesterday the group was more concerned about the effect of the payment on the share price of its German parent on the Frankfurt stock market than to make public as soon as possible the already delayed details of the £200 million package.

This sudden anxiety about the impact of the news on the Deutsche Bank price was puzzling since the amounts involved had appeared in The Times two weeks ago.

But much in the whole affair has been inexplicable and blatant in its disregard for investors' interests. Throughout, Morgan Grenfell has failed to respect its customers fundamental right to know what is happening to their money. This is shown very clearly in the timetable of events. In April this year, the group became concerned that Peter Young, the investment manager for the three funds, was putting too much money into highrisk unquoted securities.

At this time, the funds were newly swollen with cash from those using their £6,000 annual personal equity plan allowances. They had believed they were putting their money into solid European businesses. Morgan Grenfell did nothing to disabuse them of that

Investors first learnt of the scandal at the start of September. A full explanation of events was not given, although Morgan Grenfell did quently, however, the group has been less than forthcoming. Even in the compensation announcement, Morgan Grenfell promises only that no investor will actually "lose money" as a result of "recent events" (see page 25).

The final payouts are likely to be more generous than this. But investors owe their gratitude for the settlement more to Imro, the investor watchdog that has so carefully safeguarded their interests. Its intervention has been one of the few praise-worthy features in this sorry

Guaranteed?

IT IS the cherished ambition of every fund management group to convert the committed building society investor to the stock market cause.

The pursuit of this aim has led to the creation of various types of schemes that promise the excitement of an investment in shares and the solidity of a savings account.

The two may be mutually incompatible, but that does not deter the marketing men. They know that the word "guaranteed" can convince even the most sceptical saver. Add the beguiling words "tax free" and you are on to a winner, which is why unit trust groups are currently putting so much muscle behind the promotion and development of their guaranteed personal equity plans (Peps).

The guaranteed Pep seems like the best invention ever (see page 26). You gain if the market rises, but do not lose if it falls, However, as always, the small print contains the true facts. You may not benefit by the full amount of any index increase and may pay heavily if you need your cash in a hurry. Barclays, for example, will slice off 12 per cent. Such meanness is beyond even a building society.

Income strategy could hamper M&G's trust launch

M&G, one of the UK's biggest fund managers, is unlikely to win much support from advisers and investors for its new investment trust, aimed at the personal equity plan (Pep)

The split capital trust will follow M&G's overall strategy of picking UK stocks that produce higher-than-average income — it is this particular strategy that has been M&G's undoing over the past 12 months. An analysis of the performance of the UK stock market shows that companies geared for growth did far better than companies that paid out increasing dividends. For instance, M&G's small-

er companies unit trust fell 4 per cent in a year when an average smaller companies unit trusts rose 10 per cent, and the stock market rose 6 per cent. M&G's Equity investment trust, launched at this time last year to coincide with the Pep season, has risen only slightly since launch in spite of attracting nearly £300 group has come under increasing criticism for this philosophy, some independent

financial advisers have stopped putting their clients' money with the group, and, last week, at its annual results briefing, David Morgan, M&G group managing director, faced strong criticism of the investment performance of



cent to 12 per cent over the past ten years.

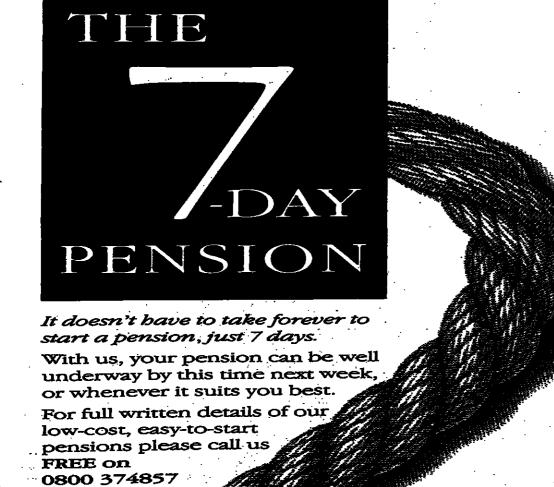
M&G acknowledged that its performance during the year had been poor but said that the UK was now at a stage in the economic cycle where high-yielding stocks would outperform. It said that the

proportion of take advantage of this shift. its trusts in M&G is also launching the the top quarfund at this time to coincide tile has with the winding up of its Dual II investment trust - it is dropped hoping that investors will keep from 81 per

their cash with the group. Ian Millward, Chase de Vere adviser, said: "We have been recommending M&G for some time. This fund does not have anything particular to make it worth recommending, although the charges are low."

February and will have a fiveweek launch period. It will carry no initial charge and will have no withdrawal fees. It will be possible to save as little as £50 a month into the trust, which carries a minimum investment of £1,000. Investors can buy a package of growth and income units, and zero-dividend preference shares, or they can just buy the

growth and income shares. CAROLINE MERRELL



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Nathan Yates looks at ways to save money by switching credit cards

How to avoid a costly new year hangover

hristmas credit card spending is set to hit record levels and for many cardholders a spring debt hangover looms. With 40 per cent of adults likely to spend £400 or more during the festive season, buying on plastic could exceed last year's £4.4 billion figure — and shoppers are unlikely to repay entirely in January. But for those who are faced with a growing repayment burden next year, help is at hand from a new wave of competitive credit card deals.

Many of these are designed to attract a transfer of debts, so there are often added incentives, such as super low temporary rates and an absence of transfer costs.

A survey carried out by The Times shows just how much difference the new offers could make to those with negative balances this spring. The £483 six-month cost of a £5,000 debt with Barclaycard can be reduced by £165 if the balance is transferred to Hamilton Direct's Visa card. Move it to Beneficial Bank's English Heritage Visa and the cost will be reduced by £200.40. Better still, transfer it to MBNA's Mastercard/Visa and the saving will be £241.80, which in effect means that the interest paid over the six-month period will be cut by more than half.

For smaller borrowing habits the expenditure may matter less, but even with an outstanding balance of £2,000 it is still possible to make significant savings. A £2,000 debt at

Beneficial Bank

M.Card/Visa

apital One Bank

People's Bank Conneticut



If you shop like Alicia Silverstone does in Clueless, it need not spell financial disaster

six months. Through transferring the balance, this can be reduced by between £57.60 at the People's Bank of Connecticut and £96.96 at MBNA, Capital One Bank or Bradford and Bingley Building Society. In each of these cases the transfer of balance costs nothing, because there is no annual

Some of the biggest savings to be made in the new year come from American credit card companies such as the People's Bank of Connecticut or MBNA, who are accustorned to heavier borrowing. But British companies have

Transfer Deal

Lower rate of

11.9% for 6 months Lower rate of 9.9% for 6 months

Lower rate of 12.9% for 6 months

14.4% rate (no time restriction) Lower rate of 7.9% until April 97

Lower rate of 9.9% for 6 months

Lower rate of 11.9% for 1 year Lower rate of 11.9% until Nov 97

10.9% the

Assuming an ongreal APR of 22.3% and that the balance remains constant

HOW THE DEALS FOR DEBT TRANSFER COMPARE

ioined the race to undercut traditional main players -and even some high street banks such as Midland Bank and the Royal Bank of Scotland now offer reduced rate

The cheapest rate credit card at the moment is Cooperative Bank's Advantage Visa, which charges 7.9 per cent APR until April I next year. Like Hamilton Direct's Visa or R Fleming/S&P Base Rate Linked, the Advantage card recours some of the costs of the reduced rate by offering no interest-free period. Borrowers who intend escaping

5 of *00022

£200.40

£241.80

2165.00

£144,00

2256.50

£221.46

296.96

296.96

£66.00

257.60

£102.60

£79.80

288.60

Thought for the day

But some of the new cards manage to stay attractive long after the festive overspend has been mastered. The People's Bank of Conneticut offers its Mastercard/Visa at 14.4 per cent APR - 8.1 per cent less than Barclaycard's rate. The interest-free period for both cards is an identical 56 days. Unlike other cut-rate companies, People's Bank is not limiting its reduction to a six month "teaser" offer.

from interest payments alto-

gether should remember this.

companies can claim that cer-

tain cut-rate deals are merely

ways of enticing borrowers

into paying more later. So-

called "teaser" rates, like MBNA's 9.9 per cent, usually

expire after six months. In

MBNA's case, it is replaced by a rate of 18.9 per cent on all

new transactions, excluding

cash and cheques.

Traditional major UK card

It's a formula which will attract both consistent overspenders and those who can keep repayments under control. Ron Urquart, of People's Bank, says: "The credit card industry is changing in the UK and I believe we are at the cutting edge. There is increasing competition to improve services and this means consumers will be the winners. And yes, it also means that overspending on your plastic may not be such a serious mistake this Christmas."

result, the sector is trading at a 40 per cent premium to the rest of the stock market, presenting few obvious investment bargains. But a few well-chosen stocks should bear fruit as further consolidation and deal making is inevitable. Next year will

see the launch of Channel 5, the UK's fifth terrestrial channel, and the first trumper blasts in the digital TV revolution. Lorna Tilbian, media analyst at Panmure Gordon, the stockbroker, says: "All ITV companies are benefiting from higher advertising revenues in the fourth

id frenzy in the television sector has

sent share prices sky high in

expectation of more takeovers. As a

مكذا بن الأحل

quarter, reflecting the return of the 'feelgood' factor in the high street. The Advertising Association is expecting 7 per cent growth in revenue this year compared with last." Her favourite stock is Carlton Communications, which at a 15 per cent premium to the rest of the stock , market, is relatively cheap.

This year has seen the three big players - Carlton, Granada, and United News & Media — begin the grand ITV carve-up, signalled by the merger between United

and Lord Hollick's MAI group. Michael Green's Carlton, the largest independent TV company, which owns the London weekday and Central ITV franchises, added Westcountry, the South West of England ITV franchise, to its roster for £85 million last month.

Scottish TV, part-owned by Flextech, the cable and satellite operator, and the Mirror Group, recently sold its 20 per cent

SECTOR IN FOCUS



Take a look at the TV concerns

stake in HTV to United. And Granada. the leisure and media giant that makes Coronation Street, is expected to gobble up the rest of Yorkshire Tyne-Tees TV eventually -- it already owns 27 per cent-Carlton would love to get its hands on HTV as its adjacent position to Westcountry would allow it to make

significant operational cost savings. But Lord Hollick's stake is a high hurdle to clear. The shoot-out between the two companies could leave investors up on the deal, especially as United must pay 420p a share for HTV under Takeover Panel rules if it wants to buy the rest of the company before the end of October. The shares are now valued at 360p.

The remaining independent franchises
- Scottish, Border, Grampian, HTV and Ulster - are unlikely to remain so beyond 1997. But analysts believe that bid activity will be put on hold until share prices cool. Eur

norgan

Morg

Impo

Digital TV, which promises 200-plus channels, pay-per-view TV, and interactive services such as home hanking, shopping, and video on demand, has to be good news for programme makers. Whether digital channels are delivered via terrestrial broadcast, satellite, or cable, they will all need content.

Canny companies, such as Flextech, owned by Telecommunications Inc. of the US, and Chris Wright's Chrysalis Group have been busily accumulating programme rights to auction off at a time when popular programmes can command a fat premium.

The BBC has already announced a link with Flextech and is considering a deal with BSkyB, the £8.3 billion satellite broadcaster in which News International, owner of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake. BSkyB is pressing ahead with its own "set-top box" technology needed to decode the digital signal.

MATTHEW WALL

THE IMES WEEKEND MOVES LETTERS

No choice but to vent annuity anger

Sir. Mr Bowtell's letter (December 14), while admirably explaining the principle of shared risk, singularly fails to answer the very profound point raised by previous correspondents. The capital in my pension fund is my money. should be able to choose how I wish to spend it.

From Mr.M. Lawrence

Currently, I have to purchase an annuity at some time. The rates on that annuity should reflect how long the insurance company expects me to live for, and should increase the yield above whatever normal reference rate available, to account for repaying me my principal in addition to that normal reference rate. This annuities fail to do.

As a concrete example, I could point to the variously

British Gas delay

From Mr R. Lindley Sir. Alerted by a letter from Geoffrey Negus, of Solihull, in Weekend Money Letters on June 15 - I also then lived in Solihull — I'checked my gas bills to see if I was receiving the 6 per cent discount due for direct debit payments. I was

Successive phone calls to British Gas in Solihull produced promises but no action. It has taken two months' effort by the Gas Consumers Council in Birmingham to persuade them to send me a

thank you. Mr Negus: and thank you, Gas Consumers Council But I am left wondering about British Gas.

Thank you, The Times;

Are they really so Yours faithfully. RICHARD LINDLEY, 28 Denham Close,

available building society per-

petual issues (Pibs) or perhaps the Standard Chartered perpetual floating rate note. Both types of instrument pay well above short-term products, and compare favourably

with the yields on longer-term products. So if I were to use my pension fund to purchase either of these I would either gain, or not lose significantly, just in terms of annual interest paid. When I die, both of these types of investment would still be available to my heirs to sell in the market to recover my original capital. I do not think that anyone

could argue that any of the building society issues, or Standard Chartered, represents an unacceptable risk compared to any insurance company, despite the precise terms under which interest may be delayed or avoided in these instruments — the likelihood is vanishingly small.

Finally, to add insult to injury. I know from my own professional experience, which is closely related to both of these types of instrument, that the insurance companies have purchased these types of product in order to back their pension liabilities. Just think of what they may

do with my pension fund when I retire — buy some Standard Chartered [perpetual floating rate notes), pay me the interest and then keep the bond itself when I die. I can manage that myself, thank you. What I want annuity, especially when it is my generation that is paying national insurance contributions for which we will not get any meaningful state pension when retirement finally

arrives. Yours faithfully, M. LAWRENCE, Cranfield Park, Suffolk.

Pension treatment unfair

From Mr C. G. Wyman Sir. Mr Bowtell's letter explaining annuities (Weekend Money, December 14) does not alter their iniquity. What this explanation amounts to is that when pension savings are invested by the annuity provider in fixed-interest securities, pensioners are simultaneously entered into a lottery based on age. Those who live longer than a certain age receive benefit from other people's savings and those who die before that age pass benefit from their savings to other people. The institutional provider aims to skim off 4 per cent of an annuitant's capital as a fee for being the lottery

Surely it remains unfair that pensioners are compelled by government rules to both

forfeit their pension capital and pay yet more fees by gambling in this way. Why should they not be allowed, if they so choose, simply to invest their own savings in government or other appropriate securities and their remaining capital, less tax, to their families at death?

The "income drawdown" scheme referred to by Mr Mitchell (Weekend Money Letters, November 30) offers some escape, but only up to age 75 when the purchase of an annuity becomes compulsory. If that upper age limit were removed much of the iniquity would go with it. Yours faithfully.

C. WYMAN. The Green. Blakesley, Towcester, Northamptonshire.

1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in November 1996

· 0,863 0.772 0.687 0.599 0.539 0.490 0.386 · 0.855 0.765 0.674 0.593 0.533 0.484 0.377 0.937 0.952 0.759 0.658 0.591 0.530 0.478 0.370 0.899 0.826 0.736 0.624 0.576 0.512 0.455 0.346 0.886 0.818 0.730 0.616 0.573 0.510 0.449 0.338 0.880 0.814 0.725 0.613 0.574 0.510 0.444 0.334 0.880 0.804 0.727 0.616 0.578 0.512 0.442 0.332 0.879 0.796 0.711 0.612 0.573 0.507 0.428 0.329 0.880 0.788 0.708 0.613 0.568 0.503 0.420 0.320 0.862 0.776 0.692 0.604 0.550 0.489 0.399 0.299 0.865 0.771 0.694 0.802 0.545 0.490 0.395 0.295 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 0.288 0.182 0.135 0.116 0.089 0.054 0.025 0.268 0.171 0.126 0.105 0.080 0.043 0.016 0.230 0.156 0.109 0.095 0.067 0.033 0.009 0.219 0.153 0.105 0.091 0.064 0.027 0.007 0.215 0.148 0.105 0.091 0.064 0.027 0.006 0.214 0.150 0.109 0.094 0.069 0.032 0.010 0.201 0.148 0.108 0.089 0.084 0.027 0.005 0.190 0.143 0.104 0.085 0.061 0.022 0.001 0.181 0.139 0.100 0.085 0.060 0.027 0.001 0.184 0.135 0.102 0.087 0.059 0.027 —

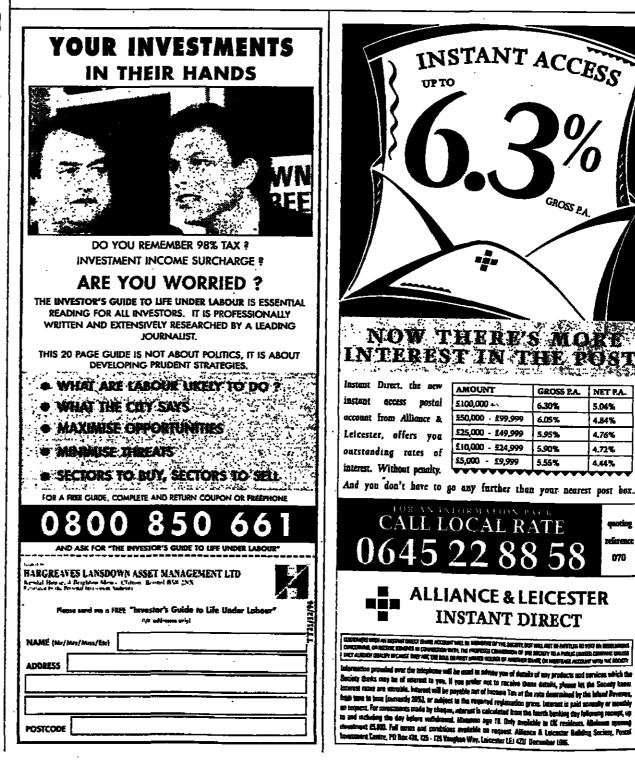
The RI month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the dependiture was incurred before that month.

0.185 0.134 0.106 0.085 0.054 0.021

28,000 financial products. 4,000 mortgages. 164 unit trust companies. Or 1 phone call. 0117 971 1177 there local IFAs and a macher for us half how free consultation. I understand that morne will sail me as a result of

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Morgan Grenfell European Growth Trust.

Morgan Grenfell Europa Fund.

Morgan Grenfell European Capital Growth Fund.

Important announcement for investors.

Morgan Grenfell Asset Management Limited and IMRO have agreed a package of compensation for investors in the above funds.

Who is eligible?

Investors will be considered for compensation if they held any of the three funds at any time between 1 August 1995 and 5 September 1996, whether or not they continue to invest in the fund(s).

What is the basis for compensation?

Investors will be compensated for any difference between the actual return they received from their Morgan Grenfell investment(s) and the return provided over the above period by an agreed index of comparable funds drawn from appropriate Micropal* data.

In addition, in the event that investments have lost value, even after this calculation, Morgan Grenfell will compensate investors up to the value of their original investment.

How will compensation be paid?

Those eligible for compensation will have the option of receiving either new units in the relevant fund(s) or cash.

When will compensation be paid?

The process of calculating compensation will begin immediately. Because of the large number of investors in the funds, payments are scheduled to be made at the end of April 1997.

Will interest be paid?

Yes. Investors will receive a payment in respect of interest on their compensation from 5 September 1996 or the date on which their holding in the fund(s) was sold, if earlier, until compensation is paid.

How are PEP holders affected?

The compensation package does not affect the tax-free status of PEPs.

How much will each investor receive?

This will depend on the timing of each investor's purchase(s) and sale(s) in the fund(s), but every investor will be compensated at least up to the level of their original investment. This means that no one will lose money as a result of recent events at Morgan Grenfell.

We will not know how much each investor will receive until we have completed the task of calculating individual payments. This is scheduled for the end of April 1997.

What should investors do now?

Investors need take no action as there is no requirement to register for compensation.

We are unable to give estimates of individual compensation payments.

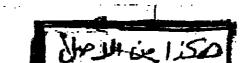
We have written to all investors in the three affected funds on 20 December and will be writing to them again at the end of January 1997 with a history of their transactions in the fund(s) together with further information on the compensation package.



Issued by Morgan Grenfell Investment Funds Limited which is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and Morgan Grenfell Unit Trust Managers Limited which is regulated by IMRO and is a member of AUTIF.

Both companies are located at 20 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 1UT. Telephone 0800 282465.

*an independent source of statistics on investment funds



Income Bond* a 6.00 4.80 3.601,000-20 000-48 3en First Opt Bond* 5.35 Children's Bond* 5.35 Children's Bond* 6.00 4.80 3.601,000-20 000

6.65 5.32 3.99

Children's Bond† 6.75 Gen Ext Rate 3.51

9th Index Linkedts 2.50

Pensnrs Bond S3 • 7.00 5.60 4.20

NATIONAL SAVINGS

100-10,000 8day

100-250,000 8day

500-50,000₆ 60day

I first ETO (ET-40 p) of int tax first, inst accs for up to E100 * Additional hidgs up to E20,000 for namested proceeds. I flex first "Rates gross and vible sQuaranteed when held for 5 years 102% net bonus for E20,000 + 12100,000 p in addition to S1 and S2 holdings "Taxishle but and in full *E500-100,000 eem higher rates." Travel rates apply

PENSION ANNUITA

100-10,000 8day

0645 645000 0645 645000

THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Winter tips point to home safety

A FREE guide to keeping homes safe and secure over Christmas and the new year is being offered by Saga Services in response to a spate of claims for household accidents last winter. Many of these could have been avoided, according to the company, which specialises in services for the over-50s. The booklet gives advice on how to prevent burst pipes, subsidence and burglary during the colder months. Saga's tips include rate tax for the trust and leaving the heating on at a minimum of 58F or draining your water system if you plan to be away: and using a hair dryer to apply gentle heat to frozen pipes. Call 0800 505253 from Monday.

■ A proportion of the 1.6 million statements of account currently being issued by the Inland Revenue for the purbeen incorrectly calculated, according to Blick Rothenberg._the chartered accountant. Taxpayers face interest charges of 8.5 per cent if an incorrect statement of account is relied upon. Tax is payable on the following dates: gross investment and rental income one payment on January 3i: income tax and class four NI

income and certain pensions and employment earnings two instalments on January 31 and July 31.

■ The Outline Guide to Charitable Giving and Establishing Charitable Gift Trusts has been updated and extended for 1997. The guide, by John Harrison, describes how to establish charitable gift trusts for both individuals and companies and how to claim basic corporation tax for the donor. Detailed sections cover the gift aid scheme and the legal responsibilities of the settlor and the trustees. Changes in the Finance Act 1996 are included. Send a cheque for £45 (includes post and packaging) to Investment and Tax Publishing Services, 31 Ayles-bury Road, Bedford, MK41 9RJ.

■ Due to an error, the compulsory purchase annuity rates on December 14 were for inflation-linked annuities rather than level annuities. An index-linked annuity is between 30 and 35 per cent lower than a level annuity. The correct figures for this week are printed on this page.

LIZANNE ROSE

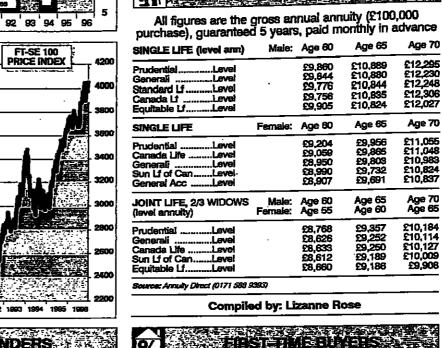
INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interes paid
Teachers' BS 01202 887171	Bullion	Instant	£500	4.80	½Y)
Scarborough BS 0800 590578	inst by Post	Postal	£5,000	5.70	Yh
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Inst Acc Post	Postal	£10,000	6.00	Yh
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Inst Acc Post	Postal	£25,000	6.05	YŊ
		Notice			Interes
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	of term	Deposit	Rate	paid
Cheltenham & Glos 0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day p	£100	5.50	Yly
First National BS 01232 314050	High Yield	30 day	£25,000	6.45	YI) Yi)
Leopold Jos & Sons 0171 588 2323	40 Day Notice	40 day	£10,000	6.22	Yh
Leeds & Holbeck BS 0113 225 7777	Postal Bonus	30.4.98p	210,000	7.00	ON
		Notice			Interes
FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	of term	Deposit	Rate	paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fixed rate	5 year	£8,575	7.50	F/Yly
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	Fixed rate	5 уваг	£5,000	7,45	F/Yh
Birmingham Midshires 0645 720721	Infitri Beater	5 year	£1,000	7.00	Yl
West Bromwich BS 0990 143668		5 year	£250	7.00	YI

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee pe annum
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.64%NC	7.90%N	Ni
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.797%N	9.90%N	Ni
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	0.917%C	11,90%	Ni

erative Bank 0800 109000 al One Bank 0800 689000 t Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	Advantage Visa Visa MasterCard/Visa	0.64%NC 0.797%N 0.917%C	7.90%N 9.90%N 11,90%	Na Na Na
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ern Rock BS 0345 421421 Direct 0800 121125 Line 0141 248 9966	12.90%H 14.00% 14.80%E	£112.66 £114.78 £114.25		£102.59 £101.45 £102.46
no interest free period, E = Available to er rates variable), H = Higher rate applie paid on Meturity, P = By Post only * RATES SHOWN ARE GRE PLEASE O	s if insurance not arranged, I	N = Întroductory rate HANGE WITHOUT :	for a limited perk	Posed Rate od, OM =
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GEF	LENDERS .
ı .	Loan Max size % Notes

2% disc-31.1.99 Fixed at 1.95% to 1.10.97



	Rates as at	December 19, 1996	
	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	5,000	Financial Assur	5.30
	10,000	Premium Life	5.50
	20,000	Premium Life	5.70
	50,000	Premium Life	5,80
2 Years			
	1,000	Premium Life	5.15
	10,000	Premium Life	5.95
	20.000	Premium Life	6.10
	50,000	Premium Life	6.15
3 Years			•
	1,000	Premium Life	5.50
	10.000	Premium Life	6.20
	20,000	Premium Life	6.30
	50,000	Premium Life	6.35
4 Years			
	1.000	Premium Life	5.85
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.35
5 Years			
	1.000	Premium Life	5.90
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.45

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNIAL INCOME

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimun purchase amoun		
Birmingham Midshires		101.59	9.220	100.17	1,000		
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	123.91	9.382	100,13	10,000		
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	139.28	9,334	100.20	10,000		
Bristol & West	13.375%	142.63	9.378	100.34	1,000		
Britannia	13.000%	138.83	9.364	100.42	1,000		
Coventry	12.125%	130.99	9.230	100.75	1,000		
First National	11.750%	122.91	9.560	100.25	10,000		
Halifax	8,750%	97.14	9.008	100.62	50,000		
Halifax	12.000%	131 <i>.</i> 22	8.877	100.28	50,000		
Halifax	13.625%	149.81	9.095	100.00	50,000		
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	144.75	9.240		1,000		
Newcastle	10.750%	117.68	9.123	100.32	1,000		
Newcastle	12.625%	137.84	9.159	100.45	1,000		
Northern Rock	12.625%	139.41	9.056	100.14	1,000		
Skipton	12.875%	139.19	9.250	100.48	1,000		
	Gross	Buyi	na I	ssue	Minimun		
FLOATING RATE	conbou	pri		price	purchase		
Cheshire (28/09-27/03		107.0		0.00	1,000		
First Nat(20/09-20/03)	8.48750%	101.0	63 10	0.00	1,000		
PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares Source: ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101							
SHARE IN FOCUS - COMMERCIAL UNION: BID SPECULATION SHARE IN FOCUS - COMMERCIAL UNION: BID SPECULATION							
		~ 		= '			

Banks Bank of Ireland 01734 510100 Midland 0800 494999	0.99 4.00	220-145k £100k+	95 80	6.25% dsc-6 mths 3% dsc-6 mths 3% discount for 12 months
%	LA	RGER	OAI	IS
Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
	rate 76	SIZE	70	NOUS
Building Societies Scarborough 0800 590547	0.25	£30-100k	95	6.99% dsc-6 mth 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Chorley & District 01257 279373	0.50	£60-120k	80	6% discount for 6 months
Mansfield 01246 202055	0.39	£75-125k	90	6.35% dsc-6 mth 2%-6mth,1%-1yr
Banks Bank of Ireland 01734 510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.25%dsc-6 mth 3% dsc-6 mth
Midland Bank 0800 494999	4.15	£50-100k	95	3% discount for 1 year

interest rate %

3.74

1.95

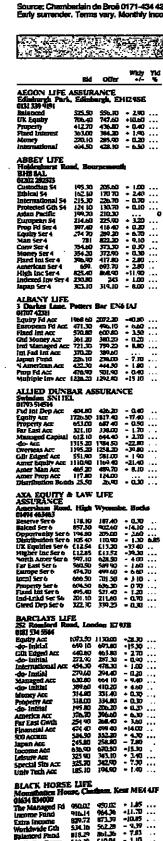
£15k+ to £500k

Lender	rate %	size	%	Notes
Building Societ	ies			
Bristol & West 0800 608088	1.95	. £15k+	95	5.04% disc 6 mntt then 1% disc-6mtt
Coventry 0800 126125	5.11	to £125k	95	2.14% discount for 12 months
Lambeth 0171 928 1331	3.74	£15-150k	95	3,25% discount for 12 months
Banks		-		
Bnk of (reland 01734 510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.25% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 months
TSB Bank 0500 758000	3.51	£15k+	95	3.74% discount for 12 months
Larger lenders, loans	and first-time	buvers tables i	v Blav's C	Buides Ltd. (01753 880482).
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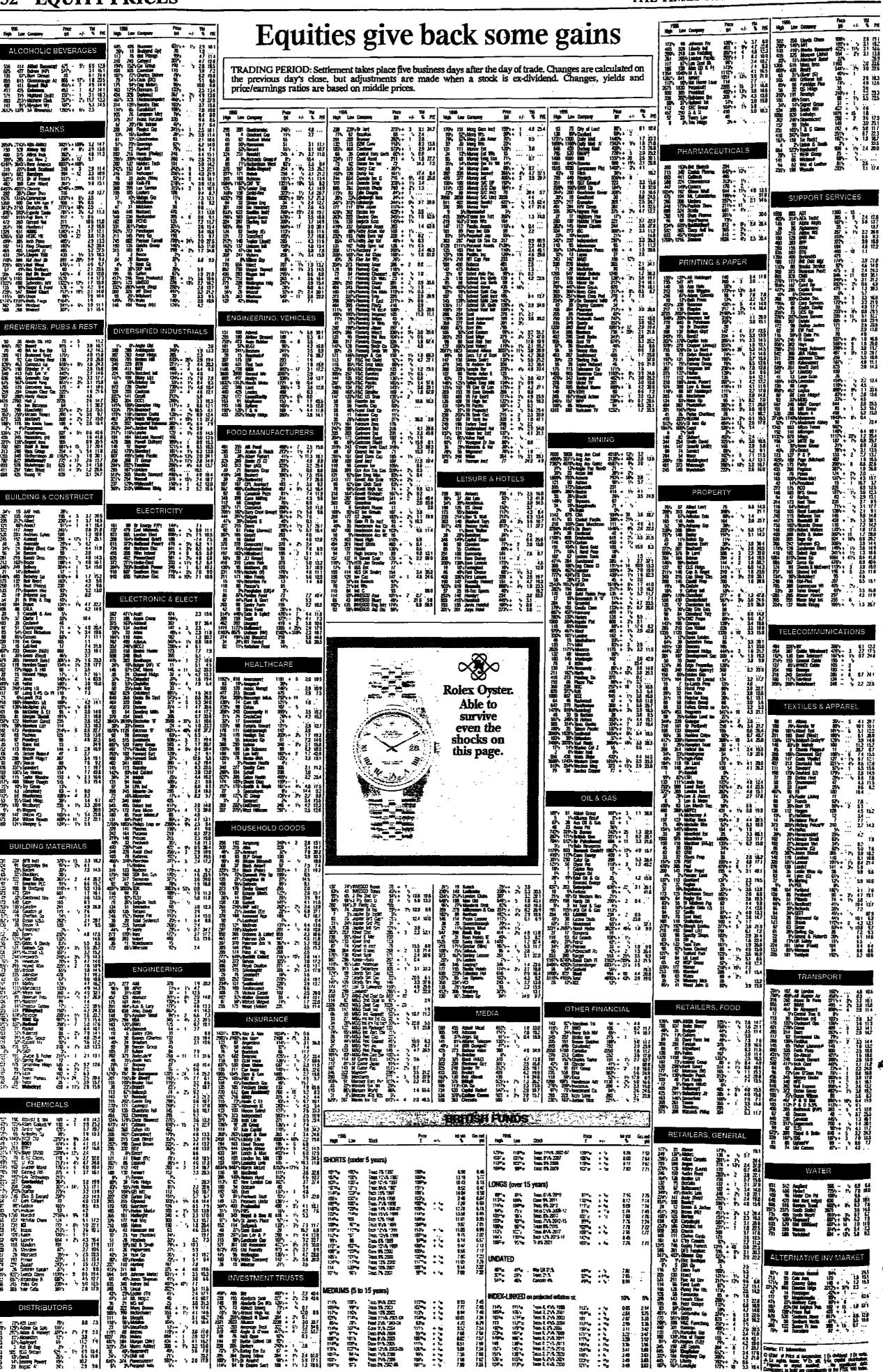
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Practic Gelb 147 65 195.83 + 0.00 25 1 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20	Equally line: 137.41 146.101 + 3.54 3.52 US indice @ 56.12 66.161 + 1.36 1.22 de-Accept 200.86 216.75 + 5.67 3.52 Segment indice @ 51.26 51.261 + 1.52 1.80	-05-Access # 125.00 122.00 + 25.00 425 Inf Opes 544.00 587.207 + 710 0.15 -05-Access 777 78 785.007 + 910 0.15 Japon 149.50 159.10 - 450 -06-Access 193.40 100.30 - 5.00	Asian Sir Miles Inc. 132.83 142.07 — 0.95 0.15 -do-Accesso 133.14 142.40 — 0.96 0.15 Acces Sigh Co. inc. 195.91 209.531 + 0.38 0.01 -do-Accesso 195.91 209.53 + 0.38 0.00	SCOTTISM FOLITABLE FO MISRS LTD 0000 454 472	UK Equally Incomin of 118.85 125.45 + 3.90 4.84 UK Equally Countin 106.68 113.49 + 3.65 2.81 European 76.99 87.90 + 1.16 134 Nit American 88.54 94.19 + 1.47 0.12
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Sans Dated CR 65-77 br.0.0 + 1.0.0 km 4 Aprentian 255.90 36.200 + 0.200 1.000 197.00 + 1.000 197	Sub-Pile 118.90 126.50 + 1.29 1.50 Small 57.50 51.50 + 1.76 2.21 Ab Arrann 123.70 131.52 + 1.25 1.50 I Invates 57.90 72.71 + 217 3.80	- 40 - Access	PH_GRIM LIMIT TRUST IMENAT LTD TIPT 207 3607 FROMERIA 136_FP 144_65 = 3.39 ENCOURM 82_56 347 = 1.10 ENCOURM 82_56 347 = 1.10 ENCOURM 82_56 45 36.5 = 1.27 LIK the 2 Extra 12.24 87_60 = 4.58 1.55 LIK the 2 Extra 12.24 87_60 = 4.58 1.55	Japan 56.24 59.56) - 2.45 013 American 100.74 106.54) + 1.84 1.32 For East 86.09 91.83 + 0.69 1.38	0345 059505 Income Tust 104.68 104.68 + 0.05 7.03 Part Geneta 102.56 102.56 + 2.46 Park Int Parts 203.09 102.69 + 0.02
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THE TIMES SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996



pheailloc's pheail

AND THE RESERVE







RACING: VERSATILE PERFORMER CAN DEFUSE UNGUIDED MISSILE'S ATTEMPT AT ASCOT DOUBLE

Inchcailloch puts reputation to test in Betterware Cup

By Richard Evans, racing correspondent

THEY do not come much have a fine record in this race more down to earth than Jeff King, whose plain speaking has been the hallmark of a career which saw him ride more than 700 winners over jumps before turning success-fully to training. Yesterday was no exception.

I have always thought Incheailloch was a decent horse and if he can't win off 10st 51b then he's nothing out of the ordinary," he said, looking ahead to the Betterware Čup, a handicap chase, the feature race at Ascot today.

The remarkable Inchcailloch, who only two months ago won the Cesarewitch at Newmarket, has followed up with three chasing successes in the past six weeks, which have shown the seven-year-old to be one of the most progressive jumpers in training. "He's not beaten a lot but he couldn't have done it any better," King added. "At Ascot we'll find out whether he's the real thing."

In a competitive race, it is difficult to rule out most of his rivals with confidence, although Travado, Bradbury Star and Strong Medicine look up against it. Unguided Missile, last year's winner, has plenty of weight but is classy and remains a Cheltenham Gold Cup hope. Horses, who run well in the Hennessy

BBCi

1.10: Make A Stand is the

clear form choice after his

front-running success in the William Hill Hurdle at

Sandown a fortnight ago and

should oblige if he runs to

within a stone of that effort. Bowcliffe Court won a

maiden hurdle at Chepstow

but may not be suited by

ping back from three miles

and will find it difficult

keeping tabs on the favourite. Bahamian Sunshine and

Going: soit
1.10 (2m Indie) 1, Tejamo Gold (R Dunwoody,
3-2); 2, Massier Tribe (10-1); 3, Most Equal (S-1),
Saint Cair 11-4 few, 7 ran, NR: Abennine,
SI, 114: P Bradley, Told Pr. SS.40; 22: 30, 23.80,
DF \$13.90 CSF \$38.34, Tricest: \$116.43,
1.40 (2m 4f ch) 1, Obsen (G Bradley, 100-30
tol); 2, Surset And Vire (4-1); 3, Major Lock
(14-1) 7 ran, 6, 5, Mass H Kright, Tole:
\$3.40; \$1.70; \$2.00. DF: \$18.80, CSF \$15.80,
2.10 (2m hole) 1, Stonecutter (R Hughes, 8-4
(ast); 2, Boy Baskensy (7-1); 3, How Could(S-1), 14 ran, NR: Nantigary, Northam
Diamond Nx, 12, M Chemnon, 10st: \$2.40,
\$2.10; \$3.50; \$3.20, DF: \$13.80, Tric: \$2.57,00,
CSF; \$18.82,
2.40 (2m ch) 1, Super Tactics (P Herley,

CSF: £18.82
2.40 (2m ch) 1, Super Tactics (P Henley, 9-2); 2, Mister Oddy (5-4 fay); 3, Mister Mission (3-1); 4 ran, 3, 134; P Alner, Tota; 55 00, DF, £3.20 CSF: £10 10.
3.10 (3m 2/ ch); 1, Coverdale Lease (Mr P Marsey, 9-2); 2, Misjors Legacy (5-1); 3, Be Brove (3-1); Ocsen Leader 5-2 hav. 12 ran, 5, 134; Mirs S Smith, Tota; £4.20; £2.00, £7.90 (DF £17.70, Trice: £3.50.
CSF: £34.55, Tricest; £591.5-4
3.40 (2m 4/ 11/0ct bile); 1, Archiment (R)

CSF 524 55. Tricast 5891.54
3.40 (2m 41 100/c hole) 1, Agistment (Fl Durwoody, 5-2: Times Prheats Handicap-per's top rating); 2, Mighty Moss (4-6 lay); 3, Barton Ward (25-1), 13 ran, NR: Beggars Benguet, Market Mayhem, 34, 6, J Fitz-gerald, Tote; 53 (1); 21-40, 51 (0, 23-50. DF: 51.30, Tro; 57.70, CSF; 24 57. Pleasement CST 200. Outstand: 517.50.

ţ;

Quadpot £17.90.

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4/1 Major Bell .

5/1 Dextra Dove

6/1 Go Ballistic **6/1** Turning Trix

25/1 Strong Medicine

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Supreme Charm is step-

these faster conditions

Uttoxeter

and Dextra Dove, a good fifth to Coome Hill at Newbury, is well treated on his early-

season form last year.

Major Bell, who, along with
Unguided Missile and Dextra
Dove, will guarantee a strong pace, is a progressive secondseason chaser who ran particularly well behind Strong Promise here last month. He will appreciate the extra halfmile and ground conditions. Turning Trix is well weighted, judged on his victory at

Nap: MIM-LOU-AND (2.35 Uttoxeter) Next best: Incheailloch (2.20 Ascot)

Newcastle three weeks ago, but may just lack the class." Go Ballistic, an Ascot specialist, finished 312 lengths behind Inchcailloch here last time and is 10lb better off, so is weighted to reverse the form. He is best coming from off the pace and should have the race to suit, but his stable is out of

Although Inchcailloch has been on the go since June, he does not appear to be nearing the end of his tether and

Trainglot suited by ground

TODAY'S RACES

ON TELEVISION

from the Flat but may appre-

ciate a stiffer test of stamina.

1.45: Pleasure Shared returns

to hurdling after falling over

Hereford

C376.31.
2.50 (2m 1/ hole) 1, My Men In Dundelik (E Murphy, 2-1); 2, Fleet Cadlet (Evens lay); 3, Scottlish Wedding (5-1), 12 ran, NRT Persian Butler(N, NK, 11), 8 Curley, Toke: 23.50; 52.30, \$1.20, \$1.70, DR: £4.40, Tiko: \$1.240, CSF: £5.28, Wirmer bought in for 5,400gms 3.20 (2m 1/ 110);d ch) 1, Indian Tracker (C Mesudia, 5-1); 2, Brogéen Lady (9-4 fav); 3,

ground conditions remain in his favour. King's matter-offact approach makes him the last person to overrate his horses but he considered the King George VI Chase for his stable star last month. A Boxing Day appointment at Kempton may have to wait a year; in the meantime, Incheailloch can complete a memorable double for King, who rode What A Buck to victory in this race 20 years

Away from the gaze of the television cameras, Tim Easterby seems set for a profitable afternoon, Simply Dashing has looked one of the best novice chasers this season and can win his fourth race over fences at Ascot (12.35), while at Haydock Shining Edge (1.20) and Good Vibes (2.30) hold solid claims.

The Uttoxeter card looks tricky, aithough I like Mim-Lou-And (2.35), who should go off at rewarding odds. Henrietta Knight's consistent fouryear-old has found two miles on the sharp side this term and should relish today's extra distance and easier surface.

At Lingfield, Silver Shred (1.35) looks a class above her rivals on her third to Castle Sweep in the Tote Silver Trophy at Chepstow and can give away the weight.

and, according to the BHB

official ratings, is more than

a stone better over hurdles

than his rivals. That may

flatter him and in a tricky

What A Question on easy

ground at Newbury last time

but had previously beaten the

Irish raider on a faster sur-

face at Wetherby. Provided

the ground remains fast.

Błaze Away, who will relish

the step up in trip, looks sure

Anythingyoulike (14-1). 16 ran. 161, 161 M Pipe Tota. \$4.30, £2.40, £1.70, £5.10. DF: \$16.40. Trio: £57.10 CSF. \$16.79.

2,16.40. HBC 257.10 Cor. 2,16.49.
3,50 (2m 11 hdie) 1, Hay Dance (N Wilsenson, 5-2 lav, Filchard Evans's nap); 2, Betschinn Bard 3-1); 3, Seley (4-1), 8 ran. 14, 9, P Hobbs. Totar 22,50; 12,00, 11,10, 11,50. DF: 93.50. CSF. 11,164. Tricast 128.08.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £2,965,07 carried foreard to Ascot today).
Placepot: £120,00. Quadpot: £22.10.

Going: good fo soit 12.30 (2m hdie) 1, Qettera (G Cahil, 6-1); 2, Bestic (16-1); 3, Fassen (1-2 lav) 11 ran. NR. Derra Point Meritun 6, 2; W McKeon. Tote 28.50; 22.20, 23.90, 5; 00 DF: 233.50. Tno: 24.40 CSF: 293.70

E44.40 CSF, E93.70
1.00 (3m hole) 1, Peperising (A Dobbin, 3-1);
2. Syanbiser (6-4 tay); 3, Boston Man (33-1);
15 'San. NR: Pebble Beach. 34, 234 G
Richards Tote: C3.30; 62 70, 51.10, 532.90.
0F, 23.50. Thio: 240.60 CSF 53.00.
1.30 (2m 4/110)d ch) 1, Lien De Famille (P
Niven, 4-1); 2, Cabic Gent (4-5 tay), 3, Sierelt
(16-1), 8 ran. NR: Bold Account, Five Flags,
World Without End. 5, 34h. J Quinn. Tote
94.50, 62.40, 61.10. DF- 65.10. Thio: 65.39.
CSF: 57.78.

CSF: \$7.76.
2.00 (2m hole) 1. Brumon (D.J Mottatt, 14-1);
2. Kerno Sabo (6-4 lav); 3, Here Comes
Herbie (8-2); 7-ran, NP Innocent George, 51,
131 D Motfatt, Tota: £14-20; 53.90, 25.60 DF:
£13.70 CSF: £32.80, Tricest, £30, 74.

2:30 (2m 4: 10x)d hole) 1, Precipice Run (G Cahá, 18-1; 2, Yacht Cub (B-1); 3, Corbieu (6-1), Blanc Seing 5-2 for 9, 10m, 17 Tough Character; 34, 2, J Berkett, Toter 625 80; 23.50, C3.00, F.50, DF 52.280 Thir 2107.10, CSF, 5126.95 Thicast 1980.85

Placepot: £42.90. Overlipot: £37.50.

Oling standard

11.45 (Im 2) 1, Kackvick (A McGlone, 5-1):
2, Sapphire Son (20-1): 13, Beleers Daughter
(7-1); 13, Maraber (12-1) Harlequin Walk 3-1
ise, 14 ran 31, 194. P Hedger, Tote 68,00:
22-40, E44,90, Maraber (130, Baleers
Daughter (10,90, 05: £29.30 CSF, £50.68
Tric: Keckvick, Sapphire Son, Mensber not
unr. Keckvick, Sapphire Son, Beleers Daughter
103,90, Trictait: Nadwick, Sapphire Son,
Maraber E223-45; Keckwick, Sapphire Son,
Belaers Daughter E326.56
12.15 (Im 1, 2) Zimit (S Sanders, 5-1), 2

Beautra Daugmer Extra 15. 12.15 (tm) 1, Zimini (S. Sonders, 5-1), 2. Mght Scopies (4-8 lay); 3, Hever Golf Mover (11-2) 10 san. Hd. 11/tl. J Toller, Toler, 28.50; 21.50, 21.30, E1.30, DF, 25.40 Trio £10.70. CSF £9.06.

CSF 29 06.
12.45 (jm 4f) 1, Zuno Piyer (Mrs A Perrett, 16-1); 2, Suiled (9-2); 3, Zahld (100-30 fag).
12 ran. Sh hd, 11 A Moore Fote 632-30; 57.10, 5

E114 40. CSF 1982.28. 1.15 (St) 1. Heavenly Mass (S Sanders, 8-1); 2. Malbourne Princess (11-4); 3. Thresplay (G-4 j-law). Eager To Please 9-4 j-law 5 ran. NR: Figlia. 21, 181. J Bridger. Tore 25.80; 22,10, 21 70 DF: £18.80. CSF 227.55.

22,10, 11 for the Park 122,23, 145 (8) 1, Bold Effort (W Ryan, 10-1); 2, Step Cn Degas (11-1); 3, Step Imp (20-1); Migs 4-1 iss. 14 ran, 194, risk Cumnanghem-Brown, Tate: \$12,30; 54,20, 62,30, 62,30, DF £42,40, Tacs \$123,60. CSF £103,24, Tricsst \$1,220,12

242.40, 160: (12816). CSP 110324, Interact (1,20.12).
2.15 (Im 2) 1, Father Dan (D Holland, 4-1):
2. Ben Gum (16-1): 3, Shenghai Li (8-1)
Absolutelysturning 3-1 tev. 14 ten. Hol. 1VI
Miss G Kellewsy. Teles: 23-50; C1.70, 23-30,
22-90. DF: 616-30 Tho. 27-70. CSF 0:54-52.
Tricast 0:469.42
2.45 (1m) 1, Feesther Bed (D R McCabe, 100-30); 2, Around Fore Alless (8-1); 3, Lochtess
(5-1) Rolley Spinney 5-2 fev. 10 ran. 3; 34: M
Lenvis. Tole: 23-90; 22-10, 63-20, 11-30. DF:
231 70. Ther 245-60. CSF: 231-27.
3.15 (77) 1, Speedy Classic (A Chris, 12-1),
2, Never Think Twice (12-1); 3, Berbascon
(16-1) Millios 5-7; ji-lev 15 ran. MR: Purple
Fang. 4, 34: M Heaton-Ells. Tote: C19-50,
27:00, 54:50, 27:60. DF: 2107-10. Thio: not won. CSF: E148.25. Titolset 92,195.74.
Placepot: 2386.10. Guedpot: 223.50.

Lingfield Park

to run well.

Hexham

race I prefer Trainglot. He disappointed behind



Unguided Missile seeks a second win in the Betterware Cup at Ascot today

HAYDOCK PARK

12.15 Parrot's Hill. 12.45 Slotematique. 1.20 Marchant Ming. 1.55 Pink Gin. 2.30 Alzulu. 3.00 General Command. 3.30 Strong Mint.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT

12.15 WIRRAL JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE

	(5-1	-U. ż	2,955: 4M) (14 Numbers)	
	1 1	0	ARABIAN HEIGHTS 15 J Markin 10-12 E Husband (3) 70	8
ı	2	64	BAASM 15 J Notion 10-12 W Fry 94	4
Į	l ā	2	FALCON'S FLAME 66 Mrs J Ramsden 10-12 J Railton 🥞	ì
ĺ	4	ō	RISH KINSMAN 31 6 Yardley 10-12 W McFarland -	_
	5	0	JOE SHAW 21 Mrs M Reseley 10-12 P Miles -	_
	6	0	MR 60LD 15 J Jefferson 10-12 R Guest 73	3
	1 7		PALAMON 156F J White 10-12 P Carberry -	
	8	3	PARROT'S HILL 15 M Tomoldins 10-12 A Dobblin' &	å
	9		SHARP COMMAND 16F P Eccles 10-12	•
1	10		SHARP COMMAND 16F P Eccles 10-12 SHU GAA 78F O Shewood 10-12 J Osborne -	-
1	11		TAGATAY 29F M Camacho 10-12 E Callaghan (3)	-
J	12		THORNTOUN ESTATE 28 M Todeuner 10-12 A S Smith 71	
ı	13	50	WHAT JIM WANTS 21 J.J. OTHER 10-12	ı
ı	14	8	WORTH THE BILL 31 F Jordan 10-12 S Wyene -	•
ł	9-4 Fa	dcon's	Flame, 3-1 Shu <u>Saz,</u> 4-1 Pareot's HBU, 6-1 Joe Sham, 8-1 olibers	

12.45 SOUTHPORT HOVICES CHASE

۲Ŧ,	400.	યા મા) (રૂ)	
1	10/1	OAT COUTURE 21 (C.G.S) (C) L Lungo 8-11-5 R Guest BLACK 8ROOK 14 M Hampspod 7-11-0	
3	112/	CARDSOO GOLD 968 (F.G.S) K Badley 7-11-0 J Railton	
5	P-34 10/0	SLOTAMATIQUE 10 (BF.F) & Rictards 7-17-0 A Dobbin SPRINAKER 24 (S) N Gasatas 6-11-0	1
		ium, 3-1 Cariboo Gold, 7-2 Sloiacrafique, 8-1 others	

1.20 WIDNES HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,485. 2m) (7)

9-4 Shining Edge, 3-1 New Ien, 4-1 Marchant Ming, 5-1 Elation, 6-1 offiers.

1.55 ST HELENS HANDICAP CHASE (£6,684: 4m 110yd) (7) 1 /P-1 CHRUSTMAS GORSE 21 (D.E.S) N Gasalee 18-11-10

7 #71 LINUS IMAS EURSE 21 (D.E.S) N Gaselee 18-11-10

10 Shorne 32

2 #5-P URAMIS COLLONESS 14 (6.5) J Fitzgratel 10-11-6 Dobbin

3 3-45 DIAMOND FORT 4 (F.6.5) J McCannochis 11-10-13 S Wynne 98

4 R32- PRIX CRN 300 (F.6.5) M Hazamand 9-10-11 P Shorn 50

5 15-6 CHEET RAGER 14 (5) N Teriston-Davies 7-10-8 D Sindywater (6)

6 2533 PAPER STAR 9 (7) M Maggardge 9-10-0 R Gests 97

7 4440 DUSALL CROSSETT 11 E Caine 11-10-0 ... S Taylor (5) 50 5-2 Christmas Gerse, 7-2 Phyt Gen, 5-1 Chief Rager, 6-1 Unaxus Cerlonges, 7-1 Paper Stan, 8-1 Diamond Fort, 100-1 Quotall Crossett.

2.30 EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (Qualifier: £3,025: 2m) (7) 1 2211 6000 VBES 15 (6) T Existry 4-11-70 ... J Ostome (2)
2 13-2 ALZILU 15 (BF.F.G.) J Fizzgrald 5-11-0 ... P Carborry 96
3 050- DAM 05 MAM 25 MAS 1 Statell 5-11-0 ... A Doble 4
4 0 ERESPRAY 18 M Humanund 5-11-0 ... D Benfley 5 40-4 GALEN 45 Mrs M Reveley 5-11-0 ... P Neven 88
6 032 PETITAND SOLINE 18 J JETSON 5-11-0 ... R Gosts 97
7 5-50 SEYMOUR'S DOUBLE 14 Mrs A Herwat 5-11-0 ... S Wynne -

6-4 Good Woos, 2-1 Alzulu, 7-2 Pentland Squire, 5-1 Salen, 16-1 others.

2107. 10. CSF. 2126.95 Tricest: £580.85
3.00 (2m 11 ch) 1. Off The Bru (Mr M Bradburne, 5-1); 2, Geta Wester (7-1); 3, Road By The River (3-1) Westwell Boy 11-8 fav. 7 ran NR* Humicane Anchew. 81, 144. Mars 5 Bradburne. Tote: £5.40; £3.30, £1.60 DF. 522.90. CSF. £43.27. Tricest £1.38 85.
3.30 (2m fiet) 1, Bobby Grant (P Niver, 5-1); 2, Magple Metody (5-1); 3, Roman Ourtew (16-1) Res Ught 9-4 fav. 18 ran. NR: Royal Spruce 219, 11 C Grant Totes £11.30; £3.80, £1.80, £10.90 DF. £34.90 Tro. £135.70 CSF £60.68. 3.00 BOSTON PIT HANDICAP CHASE (£4,711: 2m 1f) (3)

1 511- VALIANT WARRIOR 284 (CD.F.G.S) M Hammond 8-11-12
P Riven 2 2-11 95/ERAL COMMAND 56 (D.F.G.) 6 Richards 8-11-2 P Carbony 94 3 3UP5 CONTI D'ESTRUARL 9 (D.F.G.) 6 Rading 6-10-10 _ A Bobbin 97 1-2 Seneral Command, 5-2 Vallant Warner, 6-1 Contr D'Estonal.

3.30 THELWALL STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,292: 2m) (14) 3-1 Sarong Mint, 7-2 Breath Of Scandal, 4-1 Badger's Lane, 6-1 Bes Eiger, 8-1 BBby Badistan, 10-1 Marry Massquisade, No Finer Man, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS TRANERS; F. Jordan, 4 wheners from 10 numbers, 40.0%; G Rictards, 30 from 100, 30.0%; J Florgerald, 13 from 48, 27.1%; N Gaselee, 3 from 12, 25.0%, N Terision-Davies, 14 from 57, 24 6%; J Jellerson, 5 from 21, 23.0% ma 21, 23.8%. JOCKEYS: E Calinghan, 3 womers from 5 roles, 60.0%, D Bhidgwater, 11 from 39, 28.2%; A Doublin, 10 from 50, 20.0%, P Niven, 9 from 61, 14 8%, Only qualitiers

White fined £1,000

JOHN WHITE has been fined £1,000 by the Jockey Club disciplinary committee for "fail-ing to exercise reasonable care" in his handling of the six-year-old, Flying Eagle. The committee also found that the trainer had not acted in the best interests of the gelding's owner by neglecting to inform him of a tendon injury sustained in a race at Kempton in

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDEREF

12.30 Pedaltothemetal. 1.00 River Leven. 1.35 Silver Shred. 2.10 Roseberry Avenue. 2.40 John Drumm. 3.10 Mariners Mirror. 3.40 Arkley Royal.

GOING. GOOD TO SOFT

12.30 BRANDY BUTTER CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,364: 2m 110yd) (9 runners)

22,304: 2111 73 (yg) (9 10 miles)

1 544 TAXENTYS GET 7 (20,95 5) 61 Moore 6-12-0 M Athurster (4)

2 35-4 HAWTHORNE GLEN 7 (20,95 5) Mrs M Long 9-11-7 A Invine (4)

3 32-3 SHEPHERDS REST 10 (0.5) 5 Melter 4-11-2 ... 5 Hazm (7)

4 2-32 PEDALTOTHEMETAL 9 P Miles 4-10-11 ... 0 J Rawrangin

5 4PLV WIDE SUPPORT 1035F (0.5) A Moore 11-10-11 M Batchetor (4)

6 060 V DERISBAY 639 (87,95.) 3 Harger 18-10-1 ... Soptie Milchell

7 0-56 MUSEUM 21 P Wicksorth 5-10-0 ... X Atgents (4)

9 5-69 FATHER POWER 105 S Bowen 8-10-0 ... C Rae (4)

.00 PORT & STILTON NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£2,585: 2m) (9)

5-4 Rever Leven, 4-1 Casseconner, 5-1 Stage Player, 6-1 Bayrak, 12-1 King's Gold, 18-1 Policentaris Pride, 25-7 Kantannas Way

1.35 HBLB MARES ONLY CHRISTMAS HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,493: 2m 3i 110yd) (5)

1 01-3 SILVER SHRED 42 (F.B.S) M Pipe 5-12-0
2 P-11 SAB BY THE STARS 18 (D.S) T Forsier 7-10-13... A Thornton
3 -235 FORTUNES COURSE 24 (D.B.S.) J Kng 7-10-8... T J Marphy
4 1-03 LESSORIS LASS 24 (f) Mass H hapfi 4-10-1... B Ferikan
5 651- HANDY LASS 213 (D.F.G.S.) J Smath 7-10-0... M Griffiths (7) 6-4 Silver Shred, 2-1 Sail By The Stars, 9-2 Lessons Lass, 6-1 Fontunes Course. 8-1 Handy Lass

2.10 JARDINE INSURANCE SERVICES JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (£2,616: 2m 110yd) (16)

2.40 EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE

1 1-1 BOARDROOM SHUFFLE 26 F.S.) 5 ctions 5-11-5. L Aspell (3)
2 -221 DANTES CAVALIER 12 (F.S.) D Candollo 6-11-5. D Foot (3)
3 10-0 JOHN DRIAMI 21 (4,5.) F Webber 5-11-0. A THORNOOM
MASTER PLESTMI 6 Basing 4-11-0. B Festion
4 SHANASORE WARROOF 18 S Mebre 4-11-0. B Upton
5 10-2 THREE FARTHMES 14 (87.5.) JOH 6-11-0. G Upton
7 0-25 BELLE PERK 133 (85) T McGovem 5-10-9. T J Murphy 5-4 Boardroom Stoffle, 9-4 Dantes Careller, 5-1 Three Farthings, 8-1 Masier Pligram 10-1 John Drumm, 12-1 Stanagore Warner, 20-1 Belle Park.

3.10 MAC VIDI NOVICES CHASE (£3,425: 3m) (6) 1 -311 MARINERS MERROR 15 (G.S) N Tweston-Davies 9-11-7

Mr M Renal

U4.P BENBULBIN 22 J Madins 6-10-12 3 -215 KENDAL CAVALER 14 (67.5) 6 Bateur 6-10-12 ... B Fenton 4 -253 MR PICROCKET 14 (5) Mes H Anglil 8-10-12 ... 1 J Marphy 5 Q/5 MYSTIC MANNAS 373 A Tumel 10-10-12 ... DOUBTIFL 6 Q-6U GERMA'S WASER 14 M Campio 6-10-7 ... L Havey 4-5 Mariners Mirror, 5-2 Mr Picipocket, 4-1 Kentral Carolies, 12-1 Benbulbut, 20-1 George's Rager

3.40 HOLLY & IVY MAIDEN OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,312. 2m 110yd) (11)

3-1 Artisy Royal, 4-1 Good Time Dencer, 5-1 Repeal Offer, 5-1 Shanakanndi, 8-1 Pisary 10-1 Sche Grey, 12-1 Chanaia-De-Fei, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS TRANCES: P Relievey. 5 werens from 6 numbers, 83.2%; R Alerbusst. 12 from 28, 42.9%; J Old, 5 from 16, 31.3%; A Turnell. 9 from 29, 31%; R Turnell. 9 from 29, 31%; R Turnell. 9 from 38, 27.2%.

Blinkered first time LINGFIELD PARK: 2.10 Half An Inch. 340 Bebe Grey UTTOXETER: 12.25 Gutteridge

ASCOT

12.35 Simply Deshing 2.20 INCHCALLOCH (nap) 1.10 Make A Stand 2.50 Zeredar 1.45 Trainglot 3.20 Ashwell Boy

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 1.45 PLEASURE SHARED.

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

Received number. So, Signer from (F.— tell P.— pulled up. U.— unskaled inter. B.— brought often. S.— showed up. R.— relixed 0.— Gaing on which have tax won (F.— firm, good is come for the state of the

Going: Good to Firm TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

12.35 BOOK OF MUSIC HOVICES CHASE

(Grade II £12,320: 2m 3t 110yd) (8 runners) | 101 | 5909-31 OH SO RISKY 28 (C.F.G) | M | Laber D Elements | 1-10 | 5909-31 OH SO RISKY 28 (C.F.G) | M | Laber D Elements 9-11-10 | P | Hothey 88 | 102 | 2010-11 | OR ROYAL 14 (D.5) | OL Laber D F 706 5-11-10 | A P McCoy 95 | 15-11f1 | SAPPLY DASKAPG 14 (F.G.S) | C Heart Saper D F 1-1-1 | A Districtory | SAPPLY DASKAPG 14 (F.G.S) | C Heart Saper D F 1-1-1 | A Districtory | Mr M | Homes - 105 | 10014-2 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.F.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. A Fibrogradd 61 | 1014-1 | CHERNIL S. LED 12 (BF.G.S) | Mr. 15 | Bauces II Herderson 6-11-3 | Mr. 15 |

BETTING, 7-4 Or Regal, 2-1 Simply Dashing 5-1 On So Ricky, 6-1 Country Star, 8-1 Cheryl's Lad, 20-1 Lucky Dollar, 33-1 Bolcher Bason, Shalin 1995. SENIOR EL BETRUTTI 6-11-3 G Bassley 166-1) Mrs 5 Nock 8 rao

FORM FOCUS

OH SO RISKY best Dream Pade by 71 in 4-numer novice classe here (2m. good to firm) OR ROYAL best Dream Rade by 41 in 6-numer novice classe at Diegostow (2m. 31 10)yd, soh)

Simply DASHBBS best Palla Doe by 101 in 9-numer novice classe at Kemerby (2m. 4f. 110)yd, good to firm) LUCKY DOLLAR 31/1 3rd of 8 to Ocean Leader in novice brancap classe at some novice classe at Kemerby (2m. 4f. 110)yd, good to soh) CHERYL'S LAD 11/1 2nd of 4 to Selection. OR ROYAL

1.10 MITTE GROUP KENNEL GATE NOVICES HURDLE

(Grade 8 £9,212: 2m 110yd) (9 runners)

BETTING: 5-4 Maie A Stand 5-1 Bahamen Suestane, 7-1 Bowcliffe Court, 8-1 Latabeab, 10-1 Eagles Rest Supreme Charm, 12-1 Perfect Pal, 20-1 others 1995. CALL EQUINABLE 5-11-4 A P McCoy 7-4 (P Hickoris) 10 ran

FORM FOCUS

MAKE A STAND best Master Boueled by 21 in 15context Wildows Hall Handicap Hundle at Sandown
(2m 110yd, good to soft) LATAHAAB, supplied stayer on
(2m 110yd, good to soft) LATAHAAB, supplied stayer on
(2m 110yd, good to soft) LATAHAAB, supplied stayer on
(2m 110yd, good to soft) LATAHAAB, supplied stayer on
(2m 5) kmg when lest seen out. PERFECT PAL
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(4m 6), kmg when lest seen out. PERFECT PAL
(4m 6), kmg when lest

1.45 LONG WALK HURDLE (Grade I: £25,240: 3m 1f 110yd) (6 runners)

BETTIME: 5-2 Pleasure Statest, 11-4 Whal A Question, Todaglot, 9-2 Ocean Heart, 6-1 Blaze Away, 20-1 Top Spis.

1995; SILVER WEDGE 4-11-7 J Osborne (7-1) O Shanwood 11 ram

FORM FOCUS

BLAZE AWAY best Montazaman by 171 in 4-renner familicap hundle al Doncasier (2m 4/, good to 1mm).

OCEAN HAWK neck 2nd of 4 to Olympian in tambicap hundle here (3m, good to 1mm). PLEA-SURE SHARED bater in novice chast al Lingfield list time out. Best effort over hundles to beat Section.

2,20 BETTERWARE CUP

(Handicao chase: £24,379: 3m 110vd) (9 runners)

Long handicap: Go Ballishe 9-13, Turning Trix 9-13. BETTINGS 3-1 Unguided Missale, 7-2 Incharalloch, 9-2 Deute Dove, 5-1 Major Bell, 6-1 Turking Tro., Go Ballistic 16-1 Terrado, 20-1 others

1995: UNGLEDED MISSILE 7-10-8 R Durwoody (7-2) 6 Richards 9 ran

FORM FOCUS

TRAVADO 4I 4th of 5 to Absatom's Lady in William
Hill Heston Gold Cop Handicap Chase at Easter (2m 11 110pd, good to 1cm), INCHCALLOCH best Church 12 110pd, good to 1cm), INCHCALLOCH best Church 12 110pd, good to 1cm), INCHCALLOCH best Church 13 110pd, good to 1cm, INCHCALLOCH best Church 12 110pd, good to 1cm, INCHCALLOCH best Church 13 110pd, good to 1cm), INCHCALLOC

2.50 FROSMORE HANDICAP CHASE

(£9,458, 2m) (5 runners)

BETTERS: 5-4 Ask Tom, 3-1 Storm Alert, 9-2 Zenster, 7-1 Around The Hom, 8-1 Sybilin. 1995: FROKT STREET 8-18-1 J Osborne (11-8) S Sherwood 8 rae FORM FOCUS

ASK TOM best Nator by 271 in 6-name handloap chase at Newbory (2m 11, good) STORM ALERT distance 3rd of 4 to Sound Man in Tingle Creek Chase at Sendown (2m, good) STORM ALERT distance 3rd of 4 to Sound Man in Tingle Creek Chase at Sendown (2m, good) 25REDAR beat Newfall Prince by 2 m 3-namer Immolicap chase at Dorocaster (2m 110yd, good to first), Selection: ASK TOM

3.20 KNIGHTS ROYAL HURDLE

CB_559: 2m 11Dyd) (9 numbers)

601 11221-3 PALDDY'S RETURN 57 (8.8F.CD.F.G) (P 0 Donnell) F Marphy 4-11-10 R Donnecody 90

602 210155: TRAGEC HERD 161F (8.D.G.S) (Neight Hanks) M Pipe 4-11-10. ... A P McCoy 95

603 44F166 NON WHITAGE 7 (CD.G.S) (A Neight) Hanks) M Pipe 4-11-10. ... A P McCoy 95

604 44F-66 NON WHITAGE 7 (CD.G.S) (A Neight) Hanks) S-11-5. ... W Whorthington 90

605 921-4 ASSWELL BOY 7 (CD.F.G.S) (P Heyroun) 0 Sharmood 4-11-2. ... 6 Bradley 80

606 251-14 ASSWELL BOY 7 (CD.F.G.S) (P Heyroun) 0 Sharmood 4-11-2. ... M Williamson 90

607 3235-11F MR PERCY 21 (D.F.G.S) (P Housearler's Minor 8 Son) 1 Silvord 5-10-12 P Hinto 8

608 259-50 ESCAND NEL 14 (D.G.S) (Frid Chance) J Spearing 5-10-11 ... R Garrily §5

609 240-142 MISTINGUETT 29 (D.B.F.G.S) II Duggao N Inscian-Danses 4-10-11 C Lieuwellyn 90

240-142 MISTINGUETT 29 (D.B.F.G.S) II Duggao N Inscian-Danses 4-10-11 C Lieuwellyn 90

1995; PRIDWELL 5-11-5 A P McCoy (6-1) M Pipe 8 rao

FORM FOCUS

PADDY'S RETURN best Magraal Lady by 41 in 29-namer Daily Express Trompin Hardle at Cheltenham. (2m 11, good) to March, with MSTINGUETT (8th batter-oil) bead and and TRAGIC HERO about 25 12th, TRAGIC HERO beat Dreams End by neck in 19-tunner Santian Headicap Hundle at Haydook. (2m, pood) on Mar. 19-tunner Swinten Handicap Huide at Haydock.

2m, good) in May.

ASHWIELL BOY 231 lest of 4 to Karshi as Sport Off, 19-tunner Burnary Huide at Challenham (2m 10) d, good), with Kings Challenge Huide at Challenham (2m 44, good as firm). TigetAN beat Ocean Hank by 71 in 1 Selection: MSSTWGUETT

Selection: MSSTWGUETT

Selection: MSSTWGUETT

COURSE SPECIALISTS TRAINERS **JOCKEYS** Ares 7 36 16 64 4 18 13 67 12 65 16 94 C Maude A P McCoy S McHeil C Lleurellyn R Dunwoody A Maguire 24 82 73 73 199 98

RACING HEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Ketso (first race, 12.45), Ludlow (1.00) TUESDAY: No racing WEDNESDAY: No racing.
THURSDAY: Ayr (12.25), Hereford (1.05), Huntingdon (12.30), Kempton Park (24, 12.40), Lingfield Park (AW, 12.50), Market Rasen (12.30), Newton Abbot (1.25), Sedgefeld (12.40), Wetherby (12.45), Wincanton (12.45), Wolverhampton (1.00), FRIDAY: Chepslow (BBC, 12.20), Kempton (C4, 12.40), Leicester (12.55), Musseburgh (12.35), Wetherby (1.00), SATURDAY: Folkestone (1.05), Huntingdon (12.40), Newbury (BBC, 1.15), Newcastle (1.00).

Fat meeting in bold WEDNESDAY: No racing.

Flat meeting in bold

RACELINE **ASCOT HAYDOCK 102 202 UTTOXETER 103 | 203** LINGFIELD 104 204 120 220 FULL RESULTS SERVICE 168

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RUGBY UNION

Robinson calls on Bath to rise above the internal unrest

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE Pilkington Cup will be a good deal less romantic by this forecast for frost in the North causes postponements. The draw for the fifth round. which introduces the first and second division clubs to this season's compenition, gives the small fry little chance to progress and thereby robs the cup of a degree of magic.

Cheltenham, for example, must go to The Stoop to play Harlequins; Newbury, the least experienced cup team in this round, meet Leicester and Saracens will surely have far too much firepower for Reading. The only match where a first division club is certain to fall is that at the Recreation Ground, Bath, where London Irish visit a club apparently more at odds with itself than for many a year. Bath and the cup, of course,

have become virtually synonymous: ten final appearances, ten wins, including last season. Yet, this month has brought the unwanted publicity that surrounds some citycentre rowdyism and the mysterious absence ("on holiday') of Brian Ashton, the chief coach, in the week before a cup round. Added to this are the injuries that keep Phil de Glanville, the captain, Mike Catt and Eric Peters out of the

Andy Robinson, than whom no more whole-hearted player has appeared for Bath, has been coaching the side this week and reflects that: "We have always had problems off the field at Bath. It is a hightension club, but the record books show that the players have always got on with it and matches that mattered.

If, however, the club's tensions spill over. Bath's professionals may find that they now

ence; nor have the players, this season, always produced the required results, most notably in the Heineken Cup. Whether London Irish can take advantage today is open to doubt. Half of their team have played international rugby (though one, Rob Henderson, has been omitted from Ireland's warmweather training in the Algarve next weekend on grounds of fitness), but they are desper-ately in need of a domestic

pick-me-up and a visit to Bath is no placebo. The wannabes of the second



Robinson: whole-hearted

division take their affluence and their ambition to first division opposition. Bedford will fancy their prospects of beating Orrell even more if Junior Paramore, their Western Samoa international, is match-fit, while Newcastle play West Hartlepool tomor-(one of two Sunday matches, along with Bristol v Blackheath) in a match fraught with less-than-

neighbourly overtones. Richmond, the second division leaders, play Sale in as David Hands reports on the testing cup-tie

facing the underdogs

who have conquered

illness and all-comers

ix hours before kick-off and the team manager is still worrying about the composition of the XV that must take on the league leaders in the country's premier knockout competition. Not only that, there is a small matter of three leagues between them and for the past fortnight the forwards have been racked by illness. That is Newbury's situa-

tion this morning before their Pilkington Cup fifth round meeting with Leicester at Welford Road. It has been an extraordinary month for Newbury, yet they go into the Tigers' den with a brio born of an unbeaten season - save for their gala match with the Western Samoans - and the confidence to show that good rugby can be played outside the first division. "At the moment they are

firmly of the belief they can win it." Terry Burwell, the Newbury director of rugby, said of his players. Well, those able to play after the bacterial skin disease that affected nine forwards and forced the postponement of the fourth-round tie with Lydney until last Tuesday. Julian Brammer and Andy Newsham, hooker and lock respectively, still await the all-clear.

"Confidence in sport is everything and we have not learnt to lose much this season," Burwell said. It was not a quality of which he was short as a centre or wing with Leicester during the 1970s. Burwell played for Leicester in their first cup-winning side, in 1979, and his last match was a cup semi-final against London Scottish four years later, so he is well acquainted with the fervent cup atmosphere that Welford Road can generate. Newbury's ambition has

been fuelled by cash from the sale of their ground, by



and shrewd direction. They have recruited, but their growing reputation has helped: so, a player such as John McCartney, the lock, is moved by his firm from Ballymena to Berkshire and instantly finds himself at

A strong core of servicemen has taken root, among them Brammer, the Royal Engineers officer who has captained the club for three contracted players, 27 of whom are on retained contracts, with first-teamers earning appearance money and a win bonus (which is tripled for every cup win after the first round).

Newbury aiming to tweak Tigers' tail

They could have been ex-cused defeat last Tuesday: half the pack were on antibiotics, but their defence held up and they clinched the game with two late tries through Tom Holloway, the

that match may prove will be seen today, not only for the forwards but also for Nick Grecian, the former London Scottish full back who has been suffering from a different viral infection.

The town is beginning to realise we have a sports club worth supporting." Burwell said. "A game against Leicester helps the media image so much, but we are division south] and we have which bodes well for the

"I'll tell the players to go out and enjoy it, but they must also take something collectively and individually from playing Leicester — it may be just a sustained piece of pressure, a quality piece of play, even a result. They need pass them by, that they play

RFU makes seasonal gesture

THE Rugby Football Union tributed almost El million to the clubs with which it has been in such prolonged and acrimonious dispute. Each of the 24 clubs from

the Courage Clubs Championship first and second divisions will receive £40,000 - a total bill of £960,000. The RFU said that it had taken the step "to help to alleviate any shortterm financial pressures". Some of those clubs that have not attracted backing from wealthy individuals have been struggling to meet their hugely increased wage-

THUNDERER

UTTOXETER

12.25 Stormy Passage. 12.55 Sailor Jim. 1.30 Menshaar. 2.05 Art Prince. 2.35 Mim-Lou-And. 3.05 Who is Equiname. 3.35 Cherrymore.

12.25 TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL PAST PUPILS

9-4 Cormy Parsage 9-2 Mister Rm, 6-1 Samento, 6-1 Process, 10-1 Victoria Day, 2005 (787) 888-79, 14-1 Others

1 2-23 1070 GYLLEKE 14 (BF) 5 Brookston 8-12-0 Mr R Thornton (5)

12.55 CHRIS TALBOT 39TH BIRTHDAY HANDICAP CHASE (£3,664: 3m) (7)

GGING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES)

NOVICES HURDLE (£2,631: 2m) (16 runners)

Though the end may be in officials on Thursday night. sight to the pay dispute be-Welsh Society of Rugby Union Referees by Monday we should have a (WSRUR) and the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU), it will come too late to save the league programme today. Only six Swalec Cup games will go ahead, as well as a clutch of

matches in the lower reaches of the Welsh League. There is hope that the December 28 league programme will be preserved. The only sticking point is on the issue of referees' contracts. but hopefully we can negotiate around that," Hugh Banfield, the WSRUR secretary, said after a meeting with union

"Now it's a case of ringing concensus and we can move forward from there."

quality as they have yet had.

"If Sale can frighten the top

two in the first division, we

must be starting as outsiders."

Ben Clarke, the Richmond

captain, said. "We still don't

know how good we are in top-

flight terms. We will find out,

but this is the sort of game we

need to win if we want to be

promoted and go up with real

Leicester and Harlequins.

traditional cup exponents,

have taken the opportunity to

rest some of their internation-

als. Graham Rowntree and Martin Johnson are missing

from the pack which plays Newbury, though Rory Un-derwood starts his first genu-

inely competitive game since

October. Harlequins rest Will

Carling and Jason Leonard against Cheltenham, but give

Robbie Paul his first outing at

There will be a warm wel-

come at Lightfoot Green for Paul Grayson, warmer still after his omission from the

England team this season.

Grayson plays stand-off for

Northampton against Preston

Grasshoppers, the club famed

for producing Wade Dooley

but also for converting Gray-son from a footballer of poten-

tial to an international rugby

colt before the eye of the first

XV coach alighted on him; two

seasons with the seniors fol-

lowed before Grayson moved on to Waterloo and thence to

Northampton. Richard, his

brother, still plays in Preston's

lower teams, while his oppo-

nent today will be Steve Kerry.

captain of the Grasshoppers

after a peripatetic rugby league career with Salford.

Oldham and Huddersfield.

Since Kerry is also Preston's

record points-scorer, Grayson

may feel that he has a point to

confidence."

stand-off half.

player.

The WRU is understood to have conceded the referees' request that their pay should be backdated to the start of the season, rather than the start of this month, and that a sliding scale of payments should be made across the top five

☐ Dale McIntosh, the Ponty-pridd and Wales flanker, is not expected to play for eight weeks after suffering a fractured jaw in a clash of heads

2.05 HEATHYARDS ENGINEERING NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (23,087, 2m 51) (10)

4-5 At Prince, 7-1 Pearl Epee, 8-1 Speathtad Again, Walls Court, 10-1 Baroncelli 14-1 Romans Glan, Flaterry Minade, 20-1 others

2.35 HOUGHTON VAUGHAN HANDICAP HURDLE

5-2 Egyett Gift. 7-2 Dr Leurit. 4-1 Outsel, 9-2 Minn-Lou-And, 7-1 Daily Boy. 10-1 Grantetts, 12-1 offices

1 20-3 GAROLO 21 (S) C Bracks 6-11-0 D Gallagher
2 PPP- GLEMANNS 252P P Pricrard 9-11-0 Dr P Propland
3 01-P ROBERS PROE 15 (S) C Poptan 6-11-0 T Dasconder
4 - 15P ROUEF 37 (B) F (G) D McCologo 6-11-0 R Johnson
5 1/6- WHO IS FOLENAME 404 (S) N Hooderon 6-11-d J R Ramanagh

6-4 Rolle, 2-1 George 4-1 Who is Equiname, 6-1 Robins Pride 14-1 Glenmans

3.35 WEATHERBYS STARS OF TOMORROW OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1.474; 2m) (16)

BELTEFIT-RI-KIND Lifes H Moreta 4-11-4 . Mr A Winds (7)

MAY ROSE P Hebbs 6-10-13 Mr 5 Darack (7)
THE MUCRUE CHURE I GREAT 5-16-13

4-1 Jection, 5-1 Chempmore, 7-1 Benefit-In-Kind, 8-1 May Roso, 15 Cook Sentr. 10-1 The Mapine Quine, 12-1 Par Blank UK, 15-1 others

Lingfield's extra fixture

THERE will be an all-weather meeting at

Lingfield on Boxing Day to ensure there is no repeat of last year's blank day, when all ten

turf meetings were abandoned. John Smee, of

the BHB's race planning department, said: "The long-term forecast is fairly uncertain but

there's a distinct possibility of frost."

3.05 WELLMAN PLC NOVICES CHASE

(£5,070: 2m 4f 110yd) (8)

Scottish provinces begin journey towards Europe

SCOTLAND'S provincial sides, who sank without trace when first testing the European waters in the Heineken Cup earlier this season, begin the campaign for qualification for the 1997-98 tournament tomorrow with the start of the inter-district championship. Edinburgh meet Glasgow at

Myreside while Caledonia welcome the Scottish Borders at Kirkcaldy. The Scottish Exiles, who have won the championship for the past two years, can no longer take part. much to their chagrin.

The European tournament, from which Scottish districts eked out only two narrow wins, was a painful reminder of the gulf in class, domestically at least, between Scotland and the other four principle nations. On the positive side, however, it whetted players' appentes for the fray and opened their eyes to the standard of performance to which they must aspire.

There is still a long way to

go, though, according to lan Barnes, the Edinburgh coach, who yesterday dismissed the standard of Scottish rugby below international level as appalling". He and Scott Hastings, the Edinburgh captain, have attempted to instil a sense of purpose and collective responsibility to a side that has often flattered to deceive.

TOMORROW'S TEAMS

EDINBURGH: D Lee (Walsonens); H
Gâmour (Henor's FP), S Hastings
(Watsoners), M Craig (Curne), S Reed
(Boroughmur), D Hodge (Watsonians), D
Patterson (Henor's FP); R McNutty
(Boroughmur), G Etts (Curne), B Stewart
Edinburgh Academacals, B Ward (Curne),
D Burns (Boroughmur), A Lucting (Curne),
G Dell (Henor's FP), S Reed (Boroughmur)

G Les (Herick's H-P), S Heric (sortoughneith); D Stark (Meirose), A Bullioch (West of Scotland), A Garry (Watsonians), G Metalia (Basspow Acade), F Stott (West of Scotland), G Michael (GHR), G Bulloch (West of Scotland), B Robertson (Saring County), F Wallson (GHR), S Murro (GHR), M Wallson (GHR), D McLeier (West of Scotland), B Robertson (Saring County), D McLeier (West of Scotland), B Robertson (Saring County), D McLeier (West of Scotland)

'As a group, we have been kidding ourselves in the past couple of years," Barnes said. "In the 1980s we had a very strong side, which included the Calders, the Milnes and the Hastings. We expect to be better than the rest, with more clubs and more players. Our attitude has been that we are better than these guys [on opposing teams), but we are not. It is a watershed that we

have realised this. Without question, Edinburgh's performances in the Heineken Cup were the least impressive of Scotland's participants. Certain individuals did enhance their reputation, not least Andy Lucking, the Currie lock forward who qualifies for Scotland next year through residency. Edinburgh

Celedonia Reds v Scottish Borden (at Kirkcaldy)

CALEDONIA REDS: S Burns (Edinburgh Acads); S Longsteff (Dundee HSFP), P Rouse (Dundee HSFP), A Cerruthers (Kiriccaldy), J Kerr (Wessonians); M McKenzie (Stiring County), P Simpson (Edinburgh Acads); T Smith (Watsonians), K McKenzie (Stiring County), D Herrington (Kiriccaldy), D McKenzie (Stiring County), D Herrington (Kiricaldy), D McKenzie, S Grimes (Watsonians), G Flockhart (Stiring County), M Walte (Edinburgh Acads).

SCOTTISH BORDERS (Melrose unless stated): C Turnbull (Hawich): M Changleng (Gala). A Stanger (Hawich), S Nichol. Parker, C Challmers, B Recipatin, M McIlloy (Jad-Forest), S Brotherstone, S Ferguson (Peebles). S Bennet (Melso), S Alken, C Hogg. N Broughton, R Kirtipatrick

will need Lucking at his best

against a combative Glasgow

pack led by Graham Bulloch. Kenny Logan, scorer of two tries against Italy last week one after switching to full back again wears the No 15 jersey. Logan is one of three members of the international squad who line up for Glasgow, the others being Derek Stark and Murray Wallace. Rob Wainwright, who has

not played since the tour to New Zealand, has again been forced to delay his return from injury for Caledonia, but Stewart Campbell is back in the team. Nine of his club colleagues, including Craig Chaimers and Bryan Repath. figure in the Borders side who start as favourites to win the championship this season.

Stern test awaits Dungannon

By Karl Johnston

DUNGANNON'S last visit to Garryowen's Dooradoyle home, in Limerick, was back in the 1993-94 season, when they lost 19-16. Having won back Insurance Corporation League first division status this season, they make the trek south again today for a match in which Garryowen will fancy their chances.

The form of both is identical: each lost their opening league matches, then bounced back with satisfactory wins last Saturday. Dungannon are three places above Garryowen in the first division table, but only on scoring difference, and Garryowen's hopes should be enhanced by the return after injury of two key players — Killian Keane at stand-off half and Paul Hogan, the captain.

Steve McIvor, the Ireland scrum half, is out, suspended after an alleged fracas during a Munster Development League game between Garryowen and Young Munster at which he was merely a spectator. He is replaced by Colin Ford.

Keane's recovery from an ankle injury is timely, for he has enjoyed a fine season with Munster. Dominic Crotty, who, like McIvor, made his Ireland debut against Australia will be another influential figure, and the return of Hogan, the former international, to the back row will

strengthen a pack that struggled.

Dungannon have been hit by the loss of Jeremy Davidson, to London Irish, and Paddy Johns, who joined Saracens in company with Richard Wallace, of Garryowen, but Keith Walker and Charlie Simpson have been doing well in the second row, particularly in the 35-6 demolition of

Ballymena last Saturday. Dungannon's Achilles' heel though, could be a limited back line, which has little to offer apart from Stephen Bell, the Ulster scrum half. Dungannon always show commendable spirit, but rather more will be needed if they are to overcome Garryowen.

Blackrock College — one of four undefeated first division clubs - have dropped Shane Byrne, their unfit Ireland A hooker, for their away match against Old Belvedere. The hapless Byrne played his first match after a shoulder injury lay-off last Saturday, in the narrow defeat of Old

Wesley.
St Mary's College, who have a dismal league record against Limerick clubs, face Shannon, the champions, at Templeville Road today, but Lansdowne, who head the first division table on scoring differential, should have little trouble in their home match against Instonians.

TENNIS

Becker to move after threats to his family

BEHEFT-RHOND Miss H Morgal 4-11-4 Mr A Wirds (7)
BLOWNER ROCK R SECUN 4-11-4 D Gallegher
GEERNYMORE Ms J Proma 5-11-4 G Hogan (3)
4 EL CRARK SEWOR 7 R Wizodkouze 4-11-4 D Syme
GEN'S PRECIDIES 1 Wald 5-11-4 T Describe 43)
U. GO FOR THE DOUTOR 647 B McMehon 6-11-4 T Describe 43)
JUSTI JOE JAM 14 J 1 Horre 5-11-4 Mr R Thombos (5)
LEDBURHAN MASS P White 6-11-4 K Hobbert (7)
ARR BEONTAGE T DOWNERS 4-11-4 T D'O'Dennor (7)
ARR BEONTAGE T OWNERS 4-11-4 T O'Dennor (7)
ARR BEONTAGE T Phobbs 5-11-4 G T Grown
THE BIG J Leph 6-11-4 R Johnson
MAY ROSE P Hebbs 6-10-13 Mr 5 Derack (7) quit his native Germany after kidnap threats against his three-year-old son, Noah, and racial abuse against his wife. Barbara. In an interview to be broadcast tomorrow by Sat-1 television, Becker, 29, explained that his wife and son were under protective 24-hour police surveillance at his Munich home.

"My son will not go to school in Germany." Becker said as he denounced the racism to which his wife, who is black, has been subjected. "My wife has had to put up with things which I just didn't think were possible in this day and age. Sometimes people won't even give her the key to our hotel room because

BORIS BECKER wants to they don't believe her when she says she is my wife." Becker, the former Wimble-

don champion and world No l, said that he would not tolerate such discrimination and would probably move to the United States, "where I am less well-known". ☐ German tax investigators

raided Becker's home and took away several files. a newspaper said yesterday. The Bavarian finance ministry said that it could neither confirm nor deny the report in the mass-circulation Bild. The documents, seized on

Thursday, concerned the period between 1990 and 1993 when Becker was living in Monaco to avoid high Ger-

MOTOR RACING

Mansell ponders part-time drive

BY OLIVER HOLT

DESPITE the announcements, the shared statements and the overriding sense of anticlimax that descended on Formula One last week, Nigel Mansell could yet make a dramatic grand prix return with Jordan next season, it emerged yesterday.

Mansell, who tested a Jordan-Peugeot for two days in Barcelona earlier this month, punctured speculation that he was about to return to the sport this week by saying that his schedule would not permit him to devote the time to a hectic 17-race season. However, it is now thought that Mansell, who is spending Christmas and new year abroad with his family but has

consistently ruled out retire-

test programme with Jordan next month, with the possibility of a full race return later in That prospect would be

enhanced if Jordan succeed in signing Giancarlo Fisichella. from Italy, next week. Fisichella impressed the team during a two-day test at Jerez. in Spain, this week and, if Jordan succeed in persuading Flavio Briatore and Giancario Minardi, who control his contract, to release him, he is likely to get the job of second driver at Jordan ahead of the Martin Brundle, the Englishman.

The signing of Fisichella would, in turn, allow Mansell time to reaquaint himself with the Formula One car during

half of the season before a possible return late in the year, when Fisichella, regarded as one of the most promising of young drivers, might be asked to stand down.

Mansell, who has been out of the sport for 18 months, impressed with his lap times in Barcelona, where he came close to equalling the mark set by Ralf Schumacher, Jordan's other driver, but one of the reasons for his rejection of the chance to return immediately was that he felt that he needed more time to reacquaint himself with a Formula One car.

By midway through next season it will also be clear just how good the new Jordan-Peugeot is and whether the

mn an old

me part

2-23 LORO GYLLENG 14 (8P) 5 Production 8-12-0 Mar 8 Thomston (5) 22-6 WHATS YOLDS STORY 31 (BF.5) D Information (5) 19-6 ERGES OF MAR 37 (F.6.5) In Hendesson 6-11-5 JA McCantry 4-23 CELES 167M 11 (LOUSE 6-5 6) Observed 6-11-5 JA McCantry 4-23 SALOR, and 21 (C.F.6.5) P Daton 9-11-5 JA McCantry 6-12-5 SALOR, and 21 (C.F.6.5) P Daton 9-11-5 Whatsh 444 CSY MeM MAN 234 (F.6.5) T George 6-10-6 9 Owell 24-6 SY MeM MAN 234 (F.6.5) T George 6-10-6 9 Owell 24-7 CARLINSFORD LAKES 25 (S) V Rounson Jones 8-10-0 9 Owell 3-4 What's Your Story, 11-4 Lord Gyber 7-1 Cellor Town 8-1 Brace Of Mar, Loter Lon 10-1 My Man Man, 20-1 Cellorgiand Lakes. 1.30 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,474: 3m 110yd) (13) -443 ROVERBANK ROSE 33 W Cop 5-10-0 840 RORISON 15 R Dieser 7-10-0 5-2 Mercase 4-1 Note: State 6-1 Code Hill, 3-1 Tity 18-1 Rivertank Rose, 12-1 State 18-1 offers COURSE SPECIALISTS TRAPERS. 9 Stermond 17 witners from 57 runners, 29.8%, C Estats. 5 from 17, 29.4%, D Micholson, 21 from 73, 26.6%, N Henderson 7 from 27, 25.9%, J J O'Neill, 7 from 28, 25.0%, DOCKEYS: D Match. 4 winners from 12 rules, 33.3%, G Tormey, 9 from 41 22.0% J A McCarthy 5 from 27, 18.5%, D Gallagher, 9 from 52 15.5%, D Bytne, 3 from 20, 15.0%, R Johnson, 9 from 64, 14.1%

SKIING



TETTI TEST AND Dungannon

From royal decree to the dawn of Daly, choose the highlights from golf's rich history

Flag days that are part of fairway folklore

ments from golf's history? Not just the most recent, nor only those in professional golf with which we seem to be besotted at present, but the best moments anywhere, by anyone, at any time? It is a question of enormous complexity considering that golf has been

enjoyed for centuries and is now played on every continent by men and women, amateurs and professionals. As the The Times golf correspondent, I have been asked to sit on a committee to compile a list of the 25 greatest moments in golf, and I would like to recruit readers to my cause. The word "moment" could mean a specific incident, such as Gene Sarazen's albatross on the 15th at Augusta National golf club in 1935, or it could mean the summer of 1930, when Bobby Jones, the amateur, won the Amateur and Open champi-

States and Great Britain. . The idea has come from the United States and Tom Watson is involved, which is appropriate, since he figures in some of them. The 25 greatest moments will be announced next month.

onships of both the United

One of the difficulties is that the memory tends to replay the more recent events - and there have been enough in the past 20 years to last a lifetime. In June 1969, before Tony Jacklin won the Open and began the revival of golf in Europe, would anybody have foreseen that Severiano Ballesteros would emerge to thrill the world with his attacking play, his brooding charisma or that his success would spark an upsurge among mainland continental European countries such as Spain, Sweden and Germany?

those dim. decimalisation days, nearly 30 years ago, would it have seemed possible that Europe-



John Hopkins enlists the help of readers in selecting the

game's most precious memories

a century.

ans would take such a firm grip of the Masters or that the Ryder Cup would go from a one-sided competition to a biennial event of such importance that it ranks as one of the sporting occasions of that year, not one of golf's occasions? In 1969 it was inconceivable that, in June 1996, the Ryder, Walker and Curtis cups would all reside on this side of the Atlantic for only the second time this

Europe's victory in the 1995 Ryder Cup; Nick Faldo win-ning the Masters eight months ago; Great Britain and Ireland's defeat of the United States in the Walker Cup at Royal Porthcawl last September: Ballesteros's exciting victory at St Andrews in

Daly's US PGA victory is worthy of inclusion

the 1984 Open, the thrilling drama that unfolded over the closing holes of the 1991 Ryder Cup at Kiawah Island, There are so many moments such as these, and yet the choice may come from any period in golf - not just this past quarter of

The greatest single shot that I have seen was Ballesteros's three-wood from a bunker in the 1983 Ryder Cup, but, with a couple of honourable exceptions, shots per se rarely carry enough weight to make my list. Sad as it seems, therefore, I am not including Sandy iron on the 72nd hole of the 1988 Masters, a shot from a bunker that set up his victory. Christy O'Connor's two-iron at The Belfry in the 1989 Ryder Cup, Watson's wonder-fully-flighted iron through the

afternoon sun to win the 1983

Open, his fifth, or Costantino

Rocca's enormous putt on the

rumpled eiderdown of the

18th green and its surrounds at St Andrews in the Open last Some moments are so outstanding as to be indubitable. Jones, the amateur, in 1930 is not just one moment but may yet be named the moment in all golf. Ben Hogan winning three major championships in 1953 is another and a third was Jack Nicklaus conceding a short putt to Jacklin to tie the 1969 Ryder Cup.

Yet there might not have been professional golf as it is known today if there had not been an Open Championship in 1860. That was a significant moment, if ever there was one. So was the day when Francis Ouimet, an American amateur, beat Harry Vardon and Ted Ray, the two dominant professionals of the time,

25 GREAT MOMENTS IN GOLF

1338 James II of Scotland issues the famous decree that football and golf be utterly cried down and not used. 1567 Two weeks after the assassination of Lord Damley, her husband, Mary Queen of Scots was out playing golf once again,

1860 The start of competitive golf with the staging of the first Open Championship, at Prestwick.

1870 Young Tom Morris's performance in covering the first 12 holes in 47 strokes, including an eagle three at the 578-yard 1st, of the Open at Prestwick, which he won by 12 strokes, averaging 74.5 for the two rounds.

§ 1899 Freddie Tait's shot out of a bunker flooded to ankle depth on the 35th hole of the Amateur final against John Ball at Prestwick.

1913 Francis Outmet beating Harry Vardon and Ted Ray in a play-off for the US Open.

1920 Joyce Wethered not being distracted by a passing train as she putted on the 17th hole of the English Amateur at Sheringham. "What train?" she said.

1921 Roger Wethered, the amateur and brother of Joyce, initially declining to compete in a play-off for the Open at St Andrews on the grounds that he had to compete in a village cricket match the next day.

1926 Bobby Jones's mashie shot from sandy waste on to the green of the 71st hole of the Open at Royal Lytham.

1930 Bobby Jones winning the Open and Amateur Championships of the US and Britain, what was known then as the Impregnable Quadrilateral.

1935 Gene Sarazan's albatross two on the 15th hole of the fourth round of the tournament that became known as the Masters

1945 Byron Nelson's 11 consecutive victories and 18 in all.

1950 Ben Hogan winning the US Open 16 months after a severe car crash.

1953 Ben Hogan winning three of the game's four major championships.

1954 Babe Zaharias coming back after cancer to win the US Women's Open.

(6) 1960 Arnold Palmer winning the US Open with a last round of 65.

1969 Tony Jacklin winning the Open, beginning the revival of European golf 1969 Jack Nicklaus conceding a short putt to Tony Jacklin to tie the Ryder Cup

1975 Jack Nicklaus's 45-foot putt on the 70th hole of the Masters.

1977 Tom Watson beating Jack Nicklaus in the Open at Tumberry.

1979 Golfers from mainland Europe competing in the Ryder Cup, thus helping to spread the game throughout the Continent and marking the rise in standards of Europe in the

2 1982 Tom Watson chipping in on the 71st hole of the US Open.

biennial competition

1987 Europe's victory in the Ryder Cup, their first in the US.

2 1987 Great Britain and Ireland's victory in the Walker Cup and first in the US.

1989 John Daly, ninth alternate, wins the US PGA championship.

to win the 1913 US Open. That launched the game in the United States, just as Jacklin's victory at Royal Lytham in the 1969 Open provided the impetus for the game to spread like wildfire throughout Britain.

Babe Zaharias coming back to win the US Women's Open after cancer in 1954 has to be included, as does Hogan winning the US Open 16 months after a severe car crash, but I have excluded three other

sentimental moments - Nicklaus's victory in the 1986 Masters, Crenshaw's in 1995 and Faldo's in 1996. Am I right or wrong?

My 25 greatest moments in golf are given alongside. Send

Alphand strikes blow for **France**

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

LUC ALPHAND sped to victory in the men's World Cup downhill yesterday, becoming the first Frenchman to triumph in the Val Gardena World Cup downhill classic in Italy as the mighty Austrian ski machine ground to an abrupt halt.

Alphand, who has won the downhill World Cup for the past two years, clocked lmin 53 l0sec to win the weatherdelayed event, ahead of Atle Skaardal, of Norway (Imin 53.25sec), and Kristian Ghedina. of Italy (Imin 53.30sec).

Pietro Vitalini. Ghedina's compatriot, was fourth in lmin 53,34sec and Adrien Duvillard, another Frenchman. (Imin 53.48sec), completed the top five.

The day was a big let-down for the Austrians, who have dominated the World Cup this season. After filling the top four places in the opening downhill, at Val d'Isere on Sunday, they had to settle for seventh to ninth with Werner Franz clocking Imin 53.88sec. Fritz Strobl, the winner on Sunday, doing 1min 53.93sec and Hans Knaus, the overall World Cup leader, coming home in Imin 53,99sec.

Patrick Onlieb, who won the previous two races on the Saslong piste, in 1993 and 1995, was nowhere near a third success. He was seventeenth, nearly two seconds off

The race was stopped halfway through after Chad Fleischer, of the United States. crashed, although he walked away apparently unhurt.

The race was held despite falling snow, but was delayed for 75 minutes and the course was shortened by about 300 metres because of the conditions.

Alberto Tomba, of Italy, will not be racing in the World Cup giant slalom at Alta Badia tomorrow. Tomba, the triple Olympic champion, who came second behind Thomas Sykora, of Austria, on his season's debut at Madonna di Campiglio, still lacks race fitness after a bad fall in training in October.

Results, page 36

Atherton must be prepared to dust down an old acquaintance

great Christmas cheer for Michael Atherton, the England cricket captain. You may be having a nightmare in Zimbabwe, Athers, but never fear: you will be having a merry reunion with old friends as soon as you reach the second leg of the tour, in New Zealand.

Guess who will be the match referee for the Kiwi Tests? Step forward your best pal and No 1 member of the Atherton fan club. Yes, I learn from my January copy of Wisden Cricket Monthly that it is good of Peter Burge.

Burge was in charge of the 1994 series in England against South Africa, which witnessed the most pathetically vindictive act in the brief history of the match referee system. Burge was seriously miffed when, after the notorious dirtin-the-pocket business, Atherton was pre-emptively fined £2,000 by Raymond Illingworth, the England team manager. So much so that Burge subsequently fined Atherion all by himself, for the heinous crime of looking slightly peeved at being given out, an offence which even Wisden described as "stepping

minimally out of line". Before you get started in NZ, Pete, did you know that Atherton, answering a questionnaire in some publication or other, named you as "the last person he would invite to his birthday party?

Words of note Peter Maxted, one of the most

brilliant footballers I have



played with (I have led a very sheltered life) writes to suggest that this column instigates a literary award for such organs as football match pro-grammes. The first writer of the week, then, is Neil Warnock, the Plymouth Argyle manager, for this Joycean opening paragraph: "Good afternoon and welcome to our first local derby of the season. even though we are only in October, having played Bristol Rovers previously our nearest rivals, Bristol City today come down and before the start of the season I am sure that City would have been one of the favourites to get promotion this season with their super stadium in Bristol and after a shaky start they have picked up one or two results of late and I know that today's game will be as difficult as any of our previous home matches where we have really struggled to score goals



Burge will be keeping his eye on Atherton - and the ball

SIMON BARNES maximum points even though I thought the scoreline of 1-0 did not reffect the superiority that we had that day, as I am writing these notes before the Bournemouth game I just hope we can continue our unbeaten run at Dean Court."

Real deal Smirnoff vodka carried out a

poll of 10,000 sports enthusiasts in the United States before offering their "Get Real" awards, given to the most star-struck of superstars. The basketballing Dennis Rodman got 26 per cent of the vote for complaining that his salary was insufficient; a mere 13 million a year hardly covers costs, after all. In second place came Deion Sanders, for turning up to a Dallas Cowboys training session in a custom-made Mercedes Benz golf cart.

In third place came the entire basketball Dream Team, for watching the Olympic procession of nations from an executive box before strolling down to join the rest of United States team five minutes before they entered the

Rough quotes Who said this at the Olympic

Games? I, "They should take the critics out to the shooting venue and get rid of them. " 2 "Perhaps she's just having a great meet ... she maintains she was drug-free, but she swam faster than me. 3, "I will do it. I-will. I will." 4, "If anyhody sees me near a boat, they can shoot me." 5. "I don't stop being the world's best athlete because I lost one race." All these from The BBC Radio 5 Sports Yearbook 1997. edited by Peter Nichols and published by Oddball at £12.99. The essential work; the ideal last-second present.

Old bill ·

My search for a better name for the cricket-related pastime known as "one-day cricket" brings a response from R.H. Wright, late of Leathercrackers CC, suggesting a Redgrave, of course, highly suitable "crackit". He is Christie, of course.

however, the spirit has been very good and I was very very delighted at Walsall to pick up also kind enough to enclose the club bar bill for the gathering that followed the Leathercrackers' encounter with Lee Wootton on September 19, 1949: 81 pints of mild ale @ 1/1; 20 pints of brown ale @ 1/2; 5 Guinness @ 1/0; 9 nourishing stouts @ 8d; 2 lemonades @ 4d; 5½ pints of cider @ 1/0; 48 tots of rum @ 1/8; 24 tots of port @ 10d; 24 tots of sherry @ 1/0: 48 tots of Gordons gin @ 1/7; 18 tots of Irish whiskey @ 1/7; lime and peppermint 3/0. Total £17 19s 9d. There was also the princely sum of 7/11 spent on food, and 2/6 was given to "Mrs Wain", though the services she provided are not, perhaps wisely, here specified.



Leathercrackers also won the cricket match by three runs. Still counting

Thanks to everyone who has contributed Magic Numbers. Recent offerings include a hard-but-fair 18 — for Durham County Cricket Club, of course. A bottle of ambrosial Nicolas Feuillatte champagne goes to all contributors who make the final count, to be published in the next few days. Any last-minute bubbly-worthy thoughts will still just reach me, if you fax them on 0171-782 5211.

Answers to quiz: 1, Bill Camp-bell, the highly responsible mayor of Atlanta. 2, Janet Evans, graceful loser to Michelle Smith. 3, Kerri Strug, before That Vault. 4, Steve Redgrave, of course, 5, Linford

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Street, London, El 9XN. I will

give a bottle of champagne to



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EQUESTRIANISM: GRANNUSCH'S NARROW WIN CONTINUES BRITISH RUN OF SUCCESS AT OLYMPIA

Whitaker extends home rule with exciting victory

held the packed arena en-BRITISH riders continued their remarkable run of success at the Olympia showjumping championships yesterday when John Whitaker, on Virtual Village Grannusch, snatched victory from Bert Romp, of Holland, curred an untypical four faults in the Champagne Taittinger Christmas Carol Stakes. It after taking a stride out at was the eighth British win in nine international classes.

Whitaker, who has been riding like a man inspired in the purple colours of his new sponsor, Virtual Village, has won on each day of the show. Olympia seems to bring out the best in us." he said. "It's the best British show and it's the end of the year, so we pull Romp, a member of the 1992

Olympic gold medal-winning ream, has also been pulling out all the stops, but to no avail. On Thursday night he thought that he and Burg's Samantha - the mare on which he won the La Baule Derby earlier this year — had the inaugural Vink Masters in the bag, only to be thwarted by Nick Skelton on his new horse, Virtual Village Zalza.

Yesterday was the third occasion in less than a month that Romp has been runnerup to Whitaker. "It was the same in Berlin and also here on the first night." Romp said. "I went my fastest, but John was faster.

Seven horses reached yesterday's jump-off, in which Skelton, on Zalza, was drawn first. The nine-year-old Ger-man-bred gelding, who had

thralled the previous night with his effortless jumping in the Masters, clipped the second part of the double to finish on four faults. Ludger Beerbaum, Germany's 1992 Olympic champion, also in-

Romp made no mistakes and, with a time of 29.32sec. looked the likely winner. However, Whitaker is a dangerous man to be competing after you in a jump-off. A burst of applause greeted his arrival in the ring. Urged on by the partisan crowd, he took the most economical route round the six-fence course to finish in 29.20sec and add a further £2.200 to Grannusch's

£600,000 career winnings. The excitement did not end there as Jos Lansink, of Holland, last to go on Bachus Z. was half a second faster than Whitaker but hit the last.

"I just hope my luck doesn't run out before tomorrow," Whitaker said, referring to today's Volvo World Cup qualifier, the centrepiece of the five-day show, in which he will ride his Olympic horse, Virtual Village Welham, a winner on Thursday. Despite his numerous successes in qualifi-ers, most recently in Berlin last month, Whitaker has never won the Olympia .

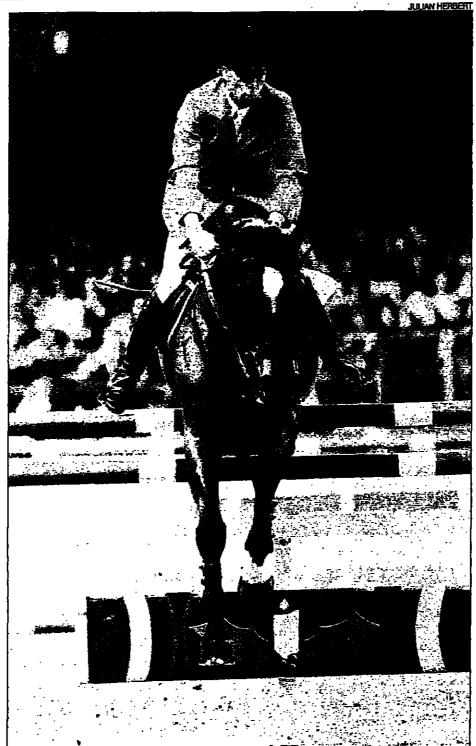
Skelton, who yesterday was still savouring his Ell,500 win in the Masters, will ride his 1995 World Cup winner, Dollar Girl, today in an attempt to avenge his defeat last year, by 0.01sec, at the hands of Beerbaum.

Now that Zalza, a horse he started riding only six weeks ago, has displayed his ability ("I had no idea he could jump that high," Skelton said on Thursday night), he may decide to ride him in the grand prix tomorrow, the final event of the show.

Earlier, Ben Dunning, a cousin of the former international showjumper, Lionel. gained his biggest success when he won the young show jumper of the year on his eight-year-old mare, Miss Par-Piece, despite incurring three faults when he missed out a fence and had to turn

It was a moot point whether Dunning, 17, had been helped by the vociferous crowd who. realising that he was taking the wrong course, started shouting. "It's an incredible atmosphere in there," Dun-ning said, "but you're not aware of anything the crowd are saying.

With the first four riders in the jump-off all incurring four faults. Dunning, the last to go. had been going for a slow clear round when he suddenly realised he had missed out fence seven. "I went back as quickly as I could to avoid time faults," he said. Geoff Glazzard, on Fields Of Athenry, joined with John Renwick, on U Design Ronville, to win the Holly



Romp put in a fast clear round on Burg's Samantha but had to settle for second again

TIMES WRITERS GIVE THEIR CHRISTMAS SELECTIONS OF THE BEST IN SPORTING LITERATURE IN 1996

Opportunity for look back to the future

THE recent decision of the International Olympic Committee to expand the number of women's hockey teams at the next Olympic Games, in Sydney, from eight to ten should stir the memories of those who fought for the introduction. in 1980, of the women's game into the Olym-

Before this aim was fulfilled there were two controlling bodies, the International Fed-Associations, consisting mainly of English-speaking nations, and those European associations which formed the International Hockey Federa-

HOCKEY

of Hockey's History, tells of how the merger was achieved by the eventual affiliation to the FIH. The reader is given an insight into the story of hockey's introduction to the Olympic Games and the formation of the FIH. with the takenver of the game's control from its British founders.

Howells, a former president of the Welsh Hockey Associa member of various commit-tees of the FIH. He was deeply involved in the setting up, four tion (FIH). years ago, of the Olympic
A fascinating chapter of Ken
Howells's book, The Romance saune. His experience has

enabled him to compile a history of hockey, depicting how the "jolly hockey sticks" image was transformed, with the help of royal patronage, into a highly respected com-

The changes in the rules include the abolition, in 1959, of the bully, which, though destroying the well-worn cliche "bully for you", did much to eliminate time-wasting on the field. The concept of artificial turf pitches which revolutation, has served the game as ionised the game is attributed an international player and as to Peter Buckland, a Canadian stockbroker whose club in Vancouver was called The

> Jokers. Rene Frank, a former president of the FIH, who saw the first exhibition match on artifi

cial turf, did not think that it was a joke and accepted the proposal to stage the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal on synthetic turf. That was the beginning of the plastic age.

The obscurity of the game's origins and the apocryphal tales connected with them date back to ancient Greek, Roman and Egyptian civilisations, all mantic element of the book.

☐ The Romance of Hockey's History, by M K Howells (published by M K Howells, care of the Hockey Association, The Stadium, Milton Keynes, £10.00 plus £1.40

SYDNEY FRISKIN

Book puts accent on sport's athleticism

INSPIRED by the top-rated American television pro-gramme of the same name, Championship Ballroom Dancing appeals to all those interested in dance sport, in which full Olympic recognition is expected soon.

Featuring full-page blackdancers on the floor and behind the scenes, it gives some understanding of the athleticism, grit and determination needed to make it to the ton.

Particularly fascinating is the account of how the tango. when introduced from Argentina earlier this century, was banned in Boston because of

BALLROOM DANCING

its sensuality. Only after it was methodically analysed and rendered orderly by the London-based Imperial Sociwas the tango accepted.

☐ Championship Ballroom Dancing, by Frank Regan and Gary Spencer (EAB Press, 7600 West 27th Street, Suite 210. Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55426. Tel: 612-927-6603, \$60.00).

RUTH GLEDHILL also.

SAILING

Babcock to rescue as dismasting threatens

By MALCOLM MCKEAG

ANOTHER yacht in the BT Global Challenge fleet has narrowly avoided the dismasting that two nights ago befell Concert. In a reported 35 knots of breeze, Heath Insured II suffered a failure of the plate securing an intermediate shroud between the second and third spreaders.

The mast began to sag alarmingly to leeward, but Michael Babcock, on the wheel at the time, immediately threw the yacht about on to port tack, releasing the loads on the unsupported top mast. His quick-thinking undoubt-edly saved the rig, which would have otherwise suffered in similar fashion to Concert.

Heath Insured II was yesterday still sailing on port tack virtually at right angles to the rest of the fleet and the direction she needs to go to get to Wellington, while her crew pondered lash-up repairs but she still has her mast.

Yesterday the race committee formally declared Concert a non-finisher on the second leg, allowing Chris Tibbs and his crew to concentrate on making Wellington in time for the restart in early February and avoiding the confusion — and even criticism — which surrounded the parallel predicament of the yacht British Steel on the race four years

Then, the dismasted yacht motored halfway across the Southern Ocean to the finish at Hobart. British Steel was allowed to count her time under motor as racing-time and allowed to continue racing without further penalty. It was a decision that caused reactions ranging from mirth

The prompt action of the race committee and the change to the rules that clarify the dismasted yacht's position and allow her to stay in the race with the chance at least of a high overall place — Concert is awarded the time of the last yacht to finish this leg plus 15 per cent - are further demonstrations of how this event has progressed in four years from being simply "the adventure of a lifetime" to a serious yacht

Group 4 is back in the lead, ahead of Save the Children. with 1,533 miles still to go to Wellington and advancing some 200 miles a day. With the forecast predicting more high winds, Mike Golding, the Group 4 skipper, lies between the rock of pressing on to match his boast that he could make Wellington by Christmas and the hard place of easing up lest the continuing rigging failures around him afflict his yacht

FOR THE RECORD

Confidence is key to Hickman's success

By CRAIG LORD

DERYK SNELLING, the new national performance director for swimming was happy to find his fears unfounded at the British championships in Sheffield yesterday as national shortcourse records from James Hickman and Andrew Clayton were the highlights on a day that produced performances worthy of selection for the world short-course

championships.
Snelling said at the European short-course championships in Rostock, Germany, last weekend, that qualifying standards — set before his arrival — for the world cham-pionships in Gothenburg, in April, might be too tough for him to honour a commitment to lead a full Great British team for the first time.

He need not have worried. Thirteen qualified on the first of three days of finals. Hickman, 18, shaved a further 0.27sec off the record he set in the heats to win the 100 metres butterfly in 53.03sec, good enough to have won him the title in Rostock, where the winning time was 53.22sec.

Coached by Dave Calleja at Stockport Metro, Hickman spoke in terms of "taking on" Denis Pankratov, the Russian who is Olympic and world champion over 100 metres and 200 metres at Gothenburg and at the European iong-course championships in August. "I'll be down to me against him by then," Hickman said confidently.

Two years ago Hickman stood at 73rd in the world on 55.27sec. He had got that down to 53.56sec earlier this year and finished sixth in the 200 metres in Atlanta. He now ranks eighth in the world and fifth in Europe over 100 metres short-course this year, and twentieth on the all-time

A prize of £200 will be given to winners in Sheffield, and borruses to those who set world records. Hickman has that in mind for the 200 metres, the final of which he will race today.

Confidence also played a part for Clayton, 23, who in Rostock won the silver medal in the 200 metres freestyle. His time yesterday lmin 46.70sec, would not have promoted him to the gold medal first British record, inside the lmin 46.71sec set by Paul Howe in 1991, and victory over an unfit Paul Palmer, the winner of the silver medal in the 400 metres in Atlanta.

With lottery funding imminent. Clayton is about to give up his part-time position as a graphic designer for sponsor-ship by Yorkshire Water.

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CHANGING TIMES

Arres No.

Series

IN BRIEF **Under-19s** shine in **Pakistan**

ENGLAND took control of

the second under-19 cricket

international against Pakistan in Sheikhupura yesterday, led by David Nash, of Middlesex, who hit a sparkling 108 not out. England reached 361. then Alex Tudor and Ben Hollioake, the Surrey bowlers, tore into Pakistan, who collapsed to 95 for six by the close of the second day of four. ☐ Brian Lara hit 86 before he was controversially given out on the second day of West Indies four-day match against Victoria in Wangarana. Lara was given "hit wicket", but officials claimed that the bats-man's foot disturbed the stumps as he set off for a run.

The touring side finished on 312 for five, in reply to Victoria's first innings of 354. ☐ Cycling: Andy Wilkinson has been awarded the Bidlake Memorial Plaque for the outstanding performance of the year. Wilkinson, 33, from Cheshire, set national timetrial records for 50 miles, 100 miles and 12 hours to win the

British best all-rounder title.

☐ Athletics: Paul Tergat, of Kenya, the double world champion, and Gete Wami, of Ethiopia, the women's titleholder, will head a line-up of leading runners at the opening cross country challenge meet of the II-event IAAF World Challenge in Brussels tomorrow. Great Britain will be represented by Keith

☐ Motor rallying: Richard Burns, of Great Britain, will race for the Mitsubishi team again in the 1997 FIA world championship.

BASKETBALL HOCKEY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): To-ronto 96 Milwaukee 93, Chicago 93 Charlotte 72 Utah 93 Marri 87, Sar Antonio 115 Houston 101, Dalbs 105 Vanouver 98: Washington 102 Los Angeles Cippers 92, Sacramento 112 Mirmecota 105 ICE HOCKEY

CRICKET

TOUR MATCHES: second day of four Wangaratta: Victoria 354 '3 Vimpari 133. Dis Berry 50 N A M Motean 5-45) West Indians 312-5 Si L Camber 30 B C Lara 86) Hobert Pelustara 299 '5 Hahal Alright 80 Mushtar, Ahmed 85, S trong 7-64: Tasmana 322-6 Li Cax 191 not out Mushtar, Ahmed 4-97; SHEFFIELD SHEDD. Brasbane (second day of four) New South Mass 190 IS R Waugh 55, A J Biothe 6-56, Queensland 460-6 IS G Law 144. J P Marte 91 I A Heaty 82 not out, A Symparis 50, Perth (first day of four) South Australa 231-8 J A Braythaw 73 D S Lethram 52: SHEIKHUPURA: Under-19 international (second day of four) England 361 (D Nach 100 not out S Peters 74: Razzag 7-118). Pal-stan 95-6

EQUESTRIANISM

OLYMPIA: Olympia Championships: Eurosport Missieloe Take Your Own Line: 1. Virtus Village Soutane (G. Billington, GB, 27 03sec 2. S.P. Nikat if Stoofmak, Ger; 277-2. 3. Africato Lat (P. Charles, Ire) 38 22. Virtik Christmes Masters: 1. Virtus! Wroge Zutza (N. Skellon, GB) (Fis. equa. 2. Burg's Samantha (B. Romp, Fot), and Price Vood (J. Fisher, GB) 4. Champiogne Taltimiger Christmas Carol Stakes: 1. Virtus! Wrogs Garriusch (J. Virtus! Wrogs Garriusch (J. Virtus! Wrogs Garriusch (J. Virtus! Wrogs Garriusch (J. Virtus! GB) (Fisher, GB) (Fisher), Bell (J. S. S. 3. Holly Paras Relay; T. Fietis of Athemy (G. Gizzzard: and U. Design Ronville (J. Romico, GB), Irinia 19 26sec. 2. Reggae (CO. Nagel, Ger) and Prologie S. Lambo (Fisherson, Austral). (CB); and Yong Internew (T. Scokdala, GB); 120 74. Speedine Telecom Young Showjumper of the Year: 1, Mrs. Parly Proce (B. Dumang: S. Ca, 54.47sec. 2. Imate (B. Twomey) 4. 36.61. 3. Ducch Scorel (C. Webley) 4. 36.74.

FOOTBALL

Late results on Thursday AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arbena C Wimbledon 2. Southampton 4 West Ham United C PONTINS LEAGUE CUP: Group three: Stockport County 1 Sicke Chy 2 FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Home Farm 0 Shannoch 0 CHARGON From Family Second round replay:
Liston Town 3 Oxford United 2.
SCHOOLS MATCHES: English Schools
Fujitim Trophy: Fourth round replays:
Chesteried 0 East Friding 3. Scutt:
Chesteried 0 Hatten 1 (South Chestere won

Chestrate i Matich I (SOLC) Chestrate won on pens)
ARGENTINIAN LEAGUE: Huracan-Comentes 3 Independiente 2; Racing Club 1 Patense 0; River Parte 3 Vesto Sansfeld 0; Ressan Centra 4 Socia Juniors 2; San Lorenzo 1 Sentrasia La Pata 2; FRENCH LEAGUE: Barda 3 Bordeaus 1

DELHI: Women's Indira Gandhi Gold Cup: China 2 India 1.

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Boston 3 Tampe Bay 0; Ottawa 5 Ponda 2; Philadelphia 5 New York Islanders 0; Pitsburgh 4 St Louis 0. MOSCOW: Izvestia Cup: Sweden 3 Finland 1: Russia 6 Canada 0: Czech Republic 3 Canada 1.

RACKETS OUEEN'S CLUB: Public achools championship: Foster Cup: Final: A Tachener-Barrett (Harrow) bt G Smathampton (Elon) 15-3, 18-16, 11-15, 15-9. Remy Cup: Final: S Fairbaim (Cheltenham) bt C Wilson (Harrow) 4-15, 15-8. 15-10, 15-12.

TiGNES, France: University metalt: Garnt statom: Men: 1, M Sandeli (Oxford) 2mm 44 93sec. 2, N Lutener (Oxford) 245 47; 3, M Smith (Cambridge) 246, 18 Women (eli Oxford) 1, M Shaw 248 35; 2, C Williams 252.77, 3, H Murray 267 54 Teemes Men: 1, Oxford 7, 21 82, 2, Cambridge 7:29 13 Women: 1, Oxford 8 38 66, 2, Cambridge 9 27 57.

8 38 66, 2. Cambridge 9 27 97.

VAL GARDENA, Italy: Men's World Cup:
Downhait 1. L. Alphand (F1) Inten
53 10sec: 2. A Sicasrcial (Nor) 1.53 25; 3.

K. Ghadres (f) 1:53 30; 4. P. Vitairs (f)
1.53 34; 5. A Duvilland (F1) 1:53 48, 6. F.
Cavegn (Switz) 1:53 76; 7. W. Franz
(Austria) 1.53 88; 8. F. Shobi (Austria)
1.53 93; 9, H. Knaus (Austria) 1:53 99; 10,
W. Perathoner (fi): 1.54 00. British posit-BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE

LATEST POSITIONS Second leg Rio de Janeir to Wellington 6,600 miles

Countailities 4. Globel 7. Mucleer Teamwork Electric Int • 14. Heath Concert . insured # 2 Save the Children 12 5. Materola 140°W Position as at 13.52GMT yesterday

DISTANCE TO WELLINGTON: 1, Group 4 1,533 miles: 2, Save 7hr Châtren 1,598; 3, Toshba Wave Warror 1 650; 4, Global Tearmenth 1,656, 5, Mobrola 1 659; 6, Commental Union 1,713, 7, Nuclear Elechie 1,725; 8, Pauss 1 o Remember 1,735; 9, Consert, 1,746; 10, Ocean Rover 1,828; 11, Time 8, Tide 1,904; 12, 3Com 1,933; 13, Courtauds International

25.38sec; 2, N Wiley (Barnet) 25.68; 3, S Handley (Bristol) 26.94; 4, A O'Contol', circl) 26.08; 5, W van der Alder (Hott) 26.22; 8, T Riley (Manchester Unsted/Saiford) 26.41; 7, K Gammon (Devon Allertoc) 26.63; 8, M Smallbone (Loughborough) 26.73, 100m butharfly; 1, J Hielman (Stockporr) 53.03 (British record); 2, P Kimyldn (Uer) 53.98; 3, J Goljovic (Sheffield) 54.44; 4, M Waldars (Torfaen) 55.23; 5, D Carr (Sheffield) 55.52; 6, S Mavin (Loughborough) 55.56; 7, P McCarthy (he) 55.57; 8, S Brinn (Jam) 56.06 Women: 200m freestyle; 1, C Huddarl (Lascls) 20m freestyle; 1, C Huddarl (Lascls) 20m foestyle; 1, C Pickering (Ipswiich) 20.09; 3; K Hawcrott (Manchester Und/Saiford) 200.62; 4, L Nicholis (Can) 201.07; 6, J Belton (Bradford) 201.73; 8, V Homer (Stockport) 202.09, 7, S Collings (Bradford) 203.52; 8, S Smard (Can) 203.59; 100m breeststroke; 1, M Buans (Hoff) 1.08.93; 2. J King (Waliham Forest) 1:09.12: 3, L Hindmarsh (Leeds) 1:10.86; 4, N Thornley (Manchaster Utd/Saliord) 1:10.91; 5, H Earp (Newcastle) 1:10.93; 6, S Lawrence (Hilingdon) 1:12.47; 7, R Marris (Canj. 1:13.34; S Whewell (Newcastle) disqualified. 200m bacistroke: 1, J Deskins (Covertiny) 2:11.91; 2, Z Cray (Ipswich) 2:13.97; 3, K Thornson (Leeds) 2:14.21, 4, K Ceher (Ealing) 2:14.22; 5, L Graham (Sunderland) 2:15.43; 6, H Barnes (Maswell) 2:15.66; 7, W Greaves (Loughborough) 2:77.39; 8, N Cawley (Ira) 2:16.02; 4:00m individual mediatory. 1, C Nichelt (Leeds) 4:46.92; 2, H Statter (Coventy) 4:47.48; 3, S Nesbill (Portamouth) 4:48.34; 4, J Swallow (Gillenwhale) 4:50.17; 5, M Thorn (Devon Atlantic) 4:50.17; 5, T Wallams (Stockdon) 4:57.51; 7, T Evanson (Harrogale) 4:59.76, 8, N Brown (Southand) 4:59.98.

SNOWHEPORTS

Conditions Runs to

5 40 tar vaned art tair 2 14/12 (Upper slopes still reasonably good; 40 of 60 lifts open)

35 60 hard varied tair cloud 12/12 (Hard-packed snow on most pistes; all lifts open) 60 190 good varied fair cloud 2 14/12 (Generally good but lowest runs getting heavy)

z 90 260 good heavy good cloud 0 20/12 (Very good skiing throughout resort; avalanche danger)

80 165 good heavy tair cloud 3 20/12 (Resort fully open today: new snow on upper runs)

180 240 good powder good cloud 0 19/12 (Excellent powder skiing; 15cm of tresh snow)

115 245 good heavy good cloud 1 19/12 (Majority of pistes in good shape and well covered)

100 240 good varied good cloud 2 19/12 (Good skiing on most pistes: all lifts open)

60 120 good heavy slushy cloud 1 20/12 (Lowest runs rain-wetted; good above 1,800 metres)

40 135 good heavy stushy clou (New snow above 1600 metres; heavy below)

40 150 good heavy good snow 0 20/12 (Good skiing at all levels; dusting of new snow)

fine -3 18/12

12.722

15 140 lair varied icy ((All pistes open; high and sunny runs best)

ione: 42, G Bell 1:56,25, 53, A Freshweier 1:57,22 World Cup positions: Downhill (after two races). 1, Alphand 140,0ts; 2, Strobt 132; 3, Franz 1:16 Overall (after nine races): 1, Knaus 328; 2, T Sylvora (Austria) 282; 3, K Aarmodt (Nor) 280; 4, M von Grüngen (Switz) 231; 5, S Locher (Switz) 25: 6, C Mayer (Austria) 207. CRANS MONTANA, Switzerland; Wornen's World Cup: Downhill: cancelled because of rain and log. TABLE TENNIS

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LEAGUE: Super division: Semi-final, first leg (in Berha) Germany bt England 4-1 (J Schopp bl H Lower 21-5, 21-13, E Schall bt L Lomas 21-19, 15-21, 21-18, O Names lost to A Holt 20-22, 15-21; Schopp and Nemes to Lomas and Holt 21-13, 13-21, 21-15, Schopp bt Lomas 18-21, 22-20, 21-19, TENNIS

MIAMI BEACH: Orange Bowl chem-pionships: Boys: 18 and under: Fourth round: A Martin (Sp) bt M Lee (GB) 7-6.

SWIMMING

SWIMMING
SHEFFELD: Uncle Ben's British winter championships: Men: 200m freestyle: 1, A Clayton (Leeds) Imm 48 70sec (British record). 2 M Stevens (Satelite) 1.48 09; 3. G Meddows (Leeds) 1.48 24; 4. J Selter (Warrender) 1.48 53; 5, G Smith (Stockport) 1.50 30 6, A Woods (Norwich) 1.50 59; 7, P Patrer (Unoch) 1.51 05; 8, G Hudson (Portsmouth) 153.39, 1,800m freestyle: 1, I Witson (Londs) 14 47.73; 2. G Hudson (Portsmouth) 15.26,02; 3. G Orphanides (Kiterwhales) 15.29 14; 4, T Archer (Nova Certunon) 15.24,46; 5, N Stoar (Nova Certunon) 15.24,46; 6, L Wardell (Loughborouth) 155.74; 7, P Boyes (Brantwootl) 16.21,90, 8, S Saundors (Trosm) 16.22,42, 50m backstroke: 1, M Hanis (Tower Harnles)

ANDORRA Soldeu AUSTRIA St Anton FRANCE

130 150 good heavy lak cloud 0 19/12 (Some new snow above 1,800 metres, heavy and wet below) Meribel Val Thorens ITALY Cervina Livigno SWITZERLAND **Klosters** Mûmen St Montz

75 310 good varied good cloud -1 19/12 (Good skiing but visibility very poor at turnes) 85 210 good varied good cloud 0 20/12 (Vary good skiing; all litts open) Source: Ski Club of Great Britain

L - lower slopes: U - upper; art - artificial

kendall endithe ingering doubts

Kendall ends the lingering doubts

Richard Hobson talks to the man who has raised expectations at Bramall Lane

ever mind the Theatre of Dreams. The busi-ness of football more often unfolds in the Theatre of the Absurd. It is an insular world of miscast players, fluffed lines, poor direction and petty jealousy. So much mis-information gushes from within, so much rumour masquerading as fact, that the most reasonable opinion of the day can appear ridiculous in time. Looking back, it is extraordinary now that any-body could have doubted Howard Kendall when he returned to league manage-ment with Sheffield United just a year and a week ago.

His transformation of Everton in the mid-Eighties. winning two league titles as well as the European Cup Winners' Cup, made him the Football Association's second choice behind Graham Taylor to succeed Bobby Robson after the 1990 World Cup. Ray Wilkins, for one, suggested he might be a decent choice to succeed Terry Venables.

These are the credentials of a man admired by his peers, not one whose appointment to a club then second from bottom of the first division should have been questioned. Twelve months on, a different line is being pursued: "Howard, could your side survive in the Premiership?

The uncertainty of the time stemmed from the nadir of his career. In April of last year he was sacked after 79 days in charge of Notts County amid allegations of heavy drinking. The accusations so angered Kendall that he threatened legal action before deciding that the cost of civil action was prohibitive. He admits that he

remains bitter. However, in the weeks that followed he realised that some of the mud would stick. He cultivated a taste for mineral quence. "Notts County was a mistake," Kendall said. "Most people who have gone there would say it was a mistake because of the working condiyou put it in the overall context of my years in the game it was just a minor hiccup."

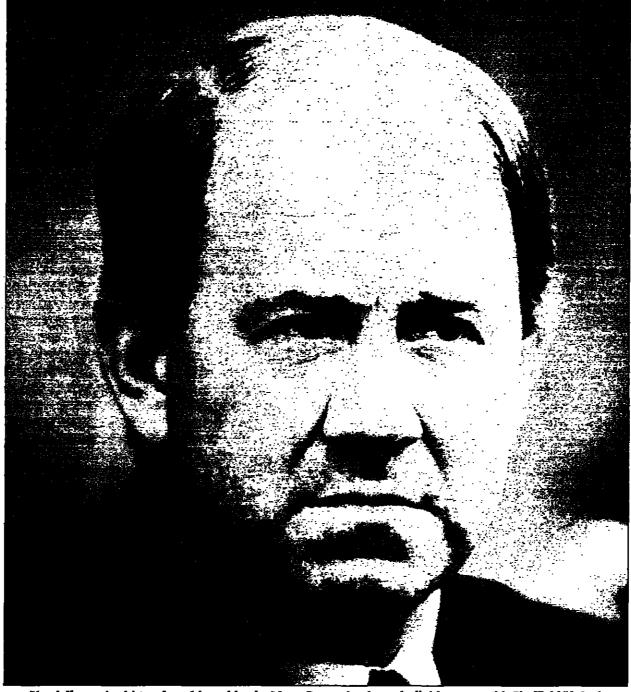
Kendall, if he chooses, is entitled to raise a glass this morning. Conveniently, Unigames under his charge and the 86 points they have accumulated indicate a promotion-winning standard. Extensive building work at Bramall Lane is complete and, with the present share flotation, Kendall felt able to bid audaciously for Paul Gascoigne last. month as he sought a player to fill the seats.

The problem is that there have been so many disappointments at this club in the past, so many broken promises, that people are perhaps a little reluctant to trust us," he said. "All I can say is that the chairman [Mike McDonald] is very ambitious and everything he says he will do, gets done." So much so that McDonald refused Manchester City permission to speak to his manager as they tried to replace Alan

When United face Barnsley at Bramall Lane today, top spot in the table beckons and the side will offer little reminder of Kendall's predecessor, Dave Bassett. Players have come and gone at a brisk rate, but there is a thread of quality through the team.

Significantly, Gordon Cowans was among his first signings last December and, although the midfield player left for Bradford over the summer, it signalled Kendall's intention to play his way out of trouble. The forward line of Andy Walker, Gareth Taylor and Petr Karchouro, a Belarus international, is one of the strongest in the division, while Michel Vonk is a redoubtable, old-fashioned stopper and Don Hutchison the sort of creative player who would be

The division is much of a muchness." Kendall said. "A lot of clubs are desperate to get into the Premiership because the rewards are so great. All I tions. It was an upsetting, can say is that we are among short period of time but when them."



Kendall remains bitter about his sacking by Notts County but has rebuilt his career with Sheffield United

Stoichkov threat to spurn Bulgaria

By Our Sports Staff

HRISTO STOICHKOV, the volatile Bulgaria striker, may have played his last game for his country. His demand for changes to the Bulgarian Football Union's hierarchy appeared to have fallen on deaf ears yesterday when Ivan Slavkov was re-elected president at an extraordinary congress, called after complaints about the union man-

Stoichkov, who flew from Barcelona to attend the congress as a guest, left before the results of the vote were announced, but had insisted he would stop playing for the national side if the management was not replaced.

officials for dismissing Dimitar Penev, the former ☐ Real Madrid have signed coach, and dropping his nephew, Lyuboslav Penev,

from the national team. He also criticised the union for accommodating the team at "a low standard" hotel in Scarborough during the European championships. "A liquidation of the national soccer team has been performed within the last year," Stoichkov told the congress. Asked whether Stoichkov's

absence would affect the national team, Slavkov said: This is not a grocery. It is up to him whether he plays." Slavkov's re-appointment will please Hristo Bonev, head coach of the national side. He said on Thursday

with whom he was unable to

Ze Roberto, the Brazil international, from Portuguesa for an undisclosed fee, the club's first signing since the Spanish transfer market reopened on Sunday. Lorenzo Sanz, the club president, also hopes to secure the services of Thierry Henry, from Monaco, and of the Sampdoria midfield player, Christian Karembeu, before the market closes on January 15.

Deportivo Coruña had the one match closure of their Riazor stadium suspended vesterday after taking their case to a Spanish civil court. Deportivo can now play Bar-Stoichkov, widely recog-nised as Bulgaria's most gift-that he would resign if the The closure was imposed in

Ndsgrove v Blackpool R: Satlord v Mame Road; St Helens v Rossendale Lasque Cup: Second round: Eastwood H v Burscough, Maghuli v Glossop North End: Mossiey v Catheroe, Perreth v Atherton Colleries, Tetlay Waller v Holker OB, Tratford v Darwert, Vaudhall GM v Nardwich.

struck in the face by a coin thrown from the crowd.

Terry Venables, the former England coach, yesterday named a squad comprised solely of home-based players for his first three matches in charge of the Australia national team. Venables will use the four-nations series, with games in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney from January 18 to 26, to assess locallybased players before the World Cup qualifiers.

New Zealand collectively give us high quality competition and different playing styles," Venables said. "It is an ideal opportunity for our players to demonstrate their ability against different and good

Loyal Dodds opts to stay at Pittodrie

By Kevin McCarra

HE MAY not quite have defied the laws of gravity, but Billy Dodds did reverse the natural order yesterday. The Aberdeen forward, who has scored 18 goals in the most successful season of his life. agreed a new deal with the club that will keep him at Pittodrie until 1999. This was a flagrant infringement of the principles that govern the football world since the

Bosman ruling. At 27, he has never been so marketable and, with his contract ending next summer, it seemed inevitable that he would consider a lucrative move to the Continent. Dodds, however, has clearly noted the progress he has made since signing, from St Johnstone, in 1994 for £800,000.

He is a more mature player nowadays and earned his first cap for Scotland, as a substitute against Latvia in the World Cup qualifier. Aber-deen will be delighted, and perhaps surprised, to find that their powers of persuasion have proved effective. Other members of the

squad, including Scott Booth, are also out of contract in June, but the club may now feel that the process of disintegration is not inevitable. Roy Aitken's team travels to Rugby Park today to meet Kilmarnock, who are presently in the hands of a caretaker manager. Bobby Williamson. The Ayrshire club are rumoured to be

considering appointing Mark
Hateley, the Queens Park
Rangers forward, to the post.
Uncertainty of a different
variety engulfs Celtic, where
the saga of Pierre van
Hooijdonk may just be limping towards a conclusion. The club's leading scorer has been in financial dispute with his employers and his reaction to a new offer has caused controversy. "Maybe OK for the homeless, but not for an international striker," the Dutchman said after terms of

£7,000 a week were proposed. The remark was, at the very least, tasteless and the club is now willing to sell him. Jorien van den Herik, the Feyenoord chairman, is keen to buy, but a valuation of around £4 million could prove a deterrent.

Phil O'Donnell could play for Celtic for the first time since August, having over Dundee United, their visitors, have been revitalised since appointing Tommy McLean one of their past 12 matches. Three Scandinavian signings have added experience and the

Leicester v Newborty
Moseley v Wigton (3 0)
Nottingham v London Scottish (3 0)
Orrell v Bedford (1 45)
Preston G'hoppers v Northampton (2 0)
Reading v Seracens (2 0)
Rotherham v Rosslyn Park (2 15)
Sale v Birthernord (2 05)

Courage Clubs Championship Third division

Exister v Havant (3 0)
Hamogate v Fylde (2 15)
London Welsh v McCrey (2 15)
Lydney v Rednuth (3 0)
Whartedate v Liverpool St Helens (2 15)

BirminghamySolihusi v Sandal ... Manchester v Aspatne Stoke-on-Trent v Sheffield

Pourn available Scient Scient

Plymouth v cambeney
RFU INTERMEDIATE CUP: Fifth round:
North: Belgrave v Wolverhampton;
Broadstreet v Luctomans. Doncaster v
Darlington Mowden Park; Nucldersfield v
Selly Dei; Lincoln v Whitchurch, Market
Bosworth v West Park Bramthope; Sedgley
Park v Middlesbrough, Wirral v Northorn
South: Cambridge v Coney Hill, Cindentord
v South Molton; Colchester v Odrodr
Guidford and Godafming v Matson; Old
Verularman v Mastenhead; Thanet Wanderers v St hee; [2 0]; Warlingham v Sudbury;
Woodford v Torquey Affricats

RFU JUNIOR CUP: Fifth round: London and South East: Deal Wanderers v Folkestone: Ernkeld Ignahens v Ctd Abbotstonens; Hadleigh v Midland Bank; Herperden v Felkestowe: Old Patientans v Tonoridge Midlands: Berningham City Officeals v Aicester, Hope Valley v Loughborough Students: Market Rasen and Louth v Northampton Casuols. North: Ellingham v Seghill; Creve and Narthwich v Wellesey; Redditch v Huddersheld YMCA. Soushport v York RI South and South West: Chapping Sodbury v Topsham, Milton Keynes v Parinswick; Tadley v Winscombe; Wells v Westbury on Severn

Woodford v Torquey Athletic

Swalec Cup

Fifth round

Aberevon v Maesieo

Blackwood v Portypool Llandovery v Cross Keys Ystradgyniais v South Wales Police

Wasps v Rugby (at Sudbury)

Fourth division north

Fourth division south

pace of Robbie Winters and Andy McLaren in attack could discomfit Celtic. Tommy Burns's team can

hardly accept anything less than victory. They are already 14 points behind Rangers and the thought of the three games they hold in hand provides only a modest consolation. Rangers themselves will feel a degree of apprehension over today's trip to Tynecastle. having lost to Hearts there last

The Edinburgh club, however, have Pasquale Bruno suspended and five other players doubtful through injury. Hearts are also facing a Rangers side who seem to be acquiring a keener edge in attack.

Erik Bo Andersen scored a hat-trick in the 4-2 victory over Kilmarnock on Tuesday and he now vies with Ally McCoist for a place in the side. Choosing between such players is



Van Hooijdonk: offensive

the kind of dilemma other

managers envy.

Jocky Scott is in charge of Hibernian only on a caretaker basis and he must reverse his team's declining form if he is to retain any hope of keeping the job. Today, they journey to Raith Rovers. At Fir Park, too, there may be faint feelings of anxiety since Motherwell and Dunfermline will recognise that the avoidance of relegation remains the prime objective this season.

No matter the worries of the men at those clubs, their plight is far less severe than that of Eamonn Bannon. Yesterday he was sacked as Falkirk manager after fielding come a lingering thigh strain. Clark, who scored the winning goal in a match with St League ordered the fixture to be replayed and fined Falkirk £25,000. Now Bannon, too, has paid the penalty.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

Kick-off 3 0 unless stated * denotes all-boket match

SHOW MUSEUM.

Shelfi Utd

(not including last right's matter)
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier divisiont
Baldock v Helesowert: Cambridge C v
Worcester C, Chelmstord v Ashlord;
Crellenhern v Merthyr. Docthester v Baston.
Gralesend and Northfleet v Sudbury T;
Grasley v Hastings. Newport AFC v Athertone, Numeator v Gloucester; Statinghoume
v Crayley Mitcland division; Bistor v Vs
Ruchur Dusters T v Grantham: Eusel v Vs
Ruchur Dusters T v Grantham: Eusel v Vs v Crawley Milcland division; Bilston v VS Rudby; Dudley T v Grantham; Everham v Corby; Hunchley T v Becharoth; Bilston v Shoppined D; Moor Green v Stouchridge; Pages R v Rectared; RC Warver's V Softmal Boro, Stafford v Rectared; RC Warver's V Softmal Boro, Stafford v Rectared; New Year of Clevedon v Reet T; Enthand Beliedere v Conderland; Fareham v Warten-super-More; Havarr v Torbridge Angels, Mergete v Forest Green; St Lonardov Warver v Fisher London; Yare T v Reshley; Warvey v Fisher London; Yare T v Newport (GW). (19) Blackpool v York (20) Brendord v Preston (21) * Bristol Rovers v Wycombe (22) Bury v Stockpoot (23) Chesterfield v Bournemouth (24) Rotherhem v Plymouth (25) Wattord v Gälingham (26) Wreshem v Bristol City (25) Wreshem v Wasan Bournamouth Blackpool Pymouth Peterborough Notis County Third division

(30) Defington v Torquay (30) Defington v Torquay (31) Exster v Swansea (32) Hartispool v Lincoln (33) Hull v Doncaster (34) Scarborough v Pulham (35) Wigan v Rochdele

Vaudrali Conterence
(38) Beth v Slevenage
(37) Bromsgrove v Famborough
(38) Dover v Stalybridge
(39) Bromsgrove v Famborough
(39) Dover v Stalybridge
(39) Hednesford v Geteehaad
(39) Marcclesfield v Tefford
(40) Morecarabe v Afrinchem
(50) Rushden & D v Kidderminster
(50) Woking v Halilax
(50) Register Frentier (fivialize (—) Woking v Halflax
(ANBOND LEAGLE: Printier division:
Bernber Bridge v Writori: Bishop Auckland v
Runcome Buston v Lencassier; Celwyn Bay v
Ernley; Frichley v Knowsley; Celssborough
v Benow; Guiseloy v Chorley; Hyde v
Boston, Leek v Accrington Stanley;
Winstord v Blyin Spartars. First division:
Ashron Litid v Leigh; Droyladen v
Stockstridge PS: Eestwood T v
Worklangton; Faniley Cellic v Uncoin Utid;
Great Francood v Gretna; Hamogate T v
Worksop; Redolfile v Athenian LIS; Whilley
Bay v Bradford Park Avenue. Bell's Scottish League Premier division First division (--) Clydebenk v East Plfe (44) Stirling v Airdrie Second division

LONDON SPARTAN LEAGUE: Premier division: American v Nathgey, Beaconsfield SYCOB v Hanwelt, Brinsdom v Coydon; Brook House v Walthern Abbey, Harrigada v Hangdon Borr, St Margaretsbury v Cocklosters Herry COVENCE.

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES: Premier diletators. Ach v Herday Wittensy.
Bedfont v Viting Sports, Chipstead v
Sanchurst, Cobnern v Fetham; ContintenCasuels v Westfield; Carallegh v Farmham;
Mersham v Astriord; Reyntes Park Vale
v Rotherner, Resaling v Covet, Welton Casuels
v Godelming and Gualdord

SCREWRIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bidesord v Mangossteld, Bridgewer v Bristington; Celine v Bridgem; Chard v Torrington; Old Obwn v Tausion; Peulton R v Barnstopis; Wassubuy v Tworton, Lee Phillips Cup: First round: Credion v Keynsham.

MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division; Arlessy v Brache Sparts, Bedford v Harpenden.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First di-vision: Totion v Gospot; Aerostructures v East Cowea: Bournemouth v Thalcham, Brookenhust v Petersfield; Christohurch v Bernerion Heath; Cowes Sports v Ports-mouth; Downton v Whilchurch, Essleigh v BAT; Romsey v Ryde Sports; Wimborne town v Andover

TOWN V ANDOVER
UNIVET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Burgass Hill v Shoreham; East-bourne T v Hassocks; Langney Sports v Aurnicie; Colescod v Selsey, Pesceraven and Telscombe v Horsham YMCA; Portfield v Mile Oak; Southwick v Pagham; Three Bridges v Hallsham; Whitehawk v Rangmer; Wick v Sahdean

Percentarian, Invities COUNTIES LEAGUE
Premier division: Cogenhoe v Kempston N
Blackstons v Bourne, Newport Pagneti
Wootton: N Spencer v Long Buckty
Spatisfing v Holbsech, S and L Cothy
Potton: Wellengborough v Stamford Cup
Second round: Boston v St Nects
Synesbury v Dectorough: Ford Sports v
Skottold. INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALL ANCE Berwell v Rocester, Biehenhall

Prendiction

Premier distaint Alecturch v Meir KaPremier distaint Alecturch v Meir KaBolehall S v Kings Heath: Dand Lloyd v
Handrahan Timbers; Highgate v West
Midland Fire Service; Messey Ferguson
Knowle; Wellesbourne v Bilston Community
College; Worcester v Coverny Sphinx. BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bloowich S v Wolverhampton C: Crediey T v Wolverhampton Utd; Gomei Res v Hill Top R; Lye T v Malvern T: Stoupport S v Darfaston; Tividale v Stalford T; Walsell Wood v Ludiow T; Westlaids v Wechesheld.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Chaddenson y Presox Cables,

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: Arthur Dunn Cup: First round proper: Carthusians v Mattermans, Haberdashers v Selopeans Replays: Foresters v Cholmeleans: Williams v Harrovans. Premier division: Chigwellians v Brentscoods. OLO BOYS' LEAGUE: Premier division: Old Hamptonens v Clapham OX. Old Ignetians v Old Kingsburians; Old Vaughgrisens v Old Lleadomans. SOUTHERN OLYMPIAN LEAGUE: Senio first division: Albenian v Southgate County, Hale End Ath v Parkfield: Old Finchleians v

TOMORROW

Pilkington Cup

Fifth round

FA Carling Premiership Asion Villa v Wimbledon (4.0) Nationwide League Swandon v Bolton (2 10) .. Trian division Leyton Orient v Brighton (12 30) FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Bray v Sigo (2.0); Deny v Bohemiers (3.15).

HOCKEY MIDLANDS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: Finals: Barford T. Stoupport and two qualifiers (at The Glades, Kudderminsler, 10:30). NATIONAL LEAGUE: Men: First division: Guildord v Westminster (7:30); Liverpool v Cardiff (3:30); Stockton v Ware (4:0) NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Armitrorpe Weltare v Hatfield Main, Armoto v Osset Trr. Astrield v Trackley; Belper T v Probering, Brog T v Glasshoughton Weltare; Hallam v Sheffield: Mattby MW Liversedge, Pontetract Cols v Denaby; Selby v North Femby FEDERATION BRÉWERY NORTHERN
LEAGUE: First division: Chester-le-Street v
West Auckland: Crook v South Sheids,
Gusborough v Billinghant, Marton v
Dunston Federation, RTM Newcaste v
Easington: Seaharn Red Star v Morpoth:
Shidon v Whicham, Tow Law v Consett.
Whitby v Duntern.

Whitoly & Cartesh
SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Chronylle v Luffeld; Colerane v
Portadouru, Glenavon v Ands; Glenforan v
Crusaders First division: Ballyclere v
Newny, Bangor v Distillery, Lame v
Ballymena. Omagh v Carnok, Ballymena. Omegi v Cariso.
PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND
LEAGUE: Brora v Wick, Academy,
Deveronnate v Bucker Thraster; Elgin v
Lossiemouth, Fort Welliam v Clacinacuctin, Fraserburgh v Poterhead; Huritly
u Chine.

V Cove

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES: First division:
Cambridge: United v Chariton Athlete
(11 0). Chelses v Totterham Hotspur
(11 0), Futham v Mithrait (11), Gallengham
v Queens Park Rangers (10 45), Levion
Onem v Arsenal (11 0); Southend United v
Nonuch City (11 0); Webtord v Porshouth
(11 0); Wess Ham United v lossisch Town
(11 0); Second division: Semet v Mycombe
Wanderers (11 0); Crystal Palace v Colchester United (11 0); Luron Town v Bristol
Rovers (11 0); Odord United v Brenthard
(11 0); Reading v Southampton (11 0); Swindon Town v Brighton (11 0); Town v Bristol
Swindon Town v Brighton (11 0); Town v Bristol
Town (11 0); Wimbledon: v
Bournemouth (11 0); Town v Bristol
ARTH-IR RAM LEAGSIE: Arthur Dunn Curc

Hubolessiello V. Indexenteur, isaa v Tauton Ton Valer, Maddenhesd v Sumbury Mid-Sussex v Old Midwintigifitens; Newbury v Indian Gym. Northempton Solms v Oxford Hawks; Old Southendian v Epson; Old Whitigitians v Tulse Hill; Robinsons v Writgitians v Tulse Hill; Robinsons v Wesibury; Stames v Bracknell; Warrington v Orgon; Wednesbury v Burton, Wes Gloucestershire v Weston-Super-Mare. SRU Inter-district championship Caledonia v Scottish Borders (at Kirkceldy, 3 0) Edinburgh v Glasgow (at Myreside, 2 30) WOMEN'S CLUB MATCHES: Bedford v

RUGBY LEAGUE Silk Cut Challenge Cup First round

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: First division: Carshelton v Not West Bank Norseman v Old Parmiterians: Old Esthermens v Crouch End vamps; Polytechnic v Child Service. South Bank v Old Actomans. SCHOOLS MATCHES (Rick-oil 10:30

ACCIDENTS

SCHOOLS MATCHES (Nick-off 10.30 unless stated) FA Premier League Trophy: Under-16: Essex v Sussex (11.30); London Cup: Under-16: Essex v Sussex (11.30); Sulfolk v Cambridgeshire, English Knowles Cup: Under-16: Essex v Sussex (11.30); Sulfolk v Cambridgeshire, English Knowles Cup: Under-16: Essex v Sussex (11.30); Sulfolk v Cambridgeshire, English Knowles Cup: Under-16: Essex v Sussex (11.30); Sulfolk v Cambridgeshire, Arsenal Trophy: South London v Blackheath Essex Walsh Shield: Harlow v Redoridge Wagner Trophy: Barlong v South Northants Kay Trophy: Bermond-scy v Hackney Star Shield: Enfleid v Halingdon, BP League: Bristol v Southampton, Semindon v Oxford: Gesport v Reading. Goodhand Trophy: Grinnsby v Nottingham v Oxford: Gesport v Reading. Goodhand Trophy: Grinnsby v Nottingham Vorkshire League: Wakefield v South Notts. Notts Cup: Final: Nottingham v Europal v Boolle: St Helens v Kirtby. Inter-essociation: Sheffield v Hudderslield, Wakefield v South Notts Crosby v Wirral: Preston v Chaister: Liverpool v Boolle: St Helens v Kirtby. Inter-essociation: Sheffield v Hudderslield, Wakefield v South Notts Green Trophy: MacClesfield v Oldham Wrennal Trophy: Backoon! Sheffield, Nottingham v Girmsby Lancashive Cup: Stockport v Trailord Altocok Cup: Halton v Stockport Staffordshire League: Burton v Wotvertampton West Midlands League: Under-16: Nuneaton v Kings Norton and S Birmergham.

BASKETBALL
BUDWESSER LEAGUE: Darby v Chester (7:30); Leicester y London Towars (7:30); Newcastle v Birmingham (7:30); Hemel and Wattord v Manchester (7:30); Thames Valley v Crystel Palace (8:0). National League, Men: First division: Mid Susser v Britton (7:30); Nottingham v Coventiv (8:0); Oxford v Solent (8:0); Women: First division: Northampton v Sheffield (8:0); Nothingham v Birmingham (6:0); Phondida v Barking and Dagenham (6:30); Spethome v Harlesden (6:0) RASKETBALL

MIDLANDS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: Preliminary round: Group C: Beaston, Bromsgrove. Edgheston Harborne Group D: Cannock Kidderminster, Streusbury West Bridglord (at The Glader, Kidderminster, 9 30) CALIB MATCHES: Basingstoke v Woking, Bedford v Stevenage; Brentwood v Chelmstord Bristol v Bath Buccaneers; Cambindge Nomads v Letchworth, Cheem v Turbinge Wells, Exeter Homets v Torbay, Gioucester City v Whitchurch; Hudderstelld v Chesterfield; Issa v Tauron Valer Maddenheed v Surhing Martin Madenheed v Surhing Martin

Abercam v Ystradgynlais Alectory of Statement Stat Weish National League First division Ceerphilly v Newport P
Cardiff v Swansea P
Ebbw Vale v Durnant P
Lanelli v Bridgend P
Pontypridd v Neath P
Treorchy v Newbridge P Burv St Edmunds: Cheam v Horsham. Colwyn Bay v Winnington Park Eastcole v Mardenhead; Enfield v Hayes; Epsom v Madenheed; Enfield v Hayes; Epsom v Poly, Lewes v Crowborough, Harborno v Dudley; Harleston v Copdock; Llan and Llan v St Fegans; Portlahead/Firebrands v Bath; Tun Wolls v East Grinstead; Thurtock v Havering; Watham Forest v Crostys; Wirnbledon v Woking; Wycombe Rye v Wokingham; Yate v Weston. Second division

Kick-off 2.30 unless stated Pilkington Cup Tennerals Premiership Bath v London Irish (30) Third divis Coventry v Kendal (3.0) Gloucester v Leeds (3.0) Harlequins v Chettenham (3.0) Stewart's Mei FP v Musselburgh (2.0) Fourth division

Corstorphine v Hilhead/Jordanhill (20) Grangemouth v Gordonians (20) Langholm v Haddington (20) Insurance Corporation League

Second division Contant v Highlield
Dolphin v Deny
Greyetones v DLSP
Malone v Wanderers
Montestown v Sunday's Well
NIFC v UCC

Winnington Park v Walsall (2 15) Kick-off 2 0 unless stated

Silk Cut Challenge Cup Beverley v Emibassy Blackbrook v Kells ... Blackbrook v Kells .

Dewsbury Moor v Upton and Finckley
Dudley Hill v Park Amaleurs (2 30)
East Leads v Kingston Comm
Eastmoor v Worth Village
Egremon v Folly Lane
Featherstone Amaleur v West Bowling
Hemel Hempstaad v Leads Univ (2 30)
Heworth v Students R L O B (2 30)
Hulf Dockers v Bisons
Lenh East v Kenhley Ah Leigh East v Keighley Alb Leigh Miners v Farinworth Lock Lane v Stanningley Mayfield v Eccles Militord v Norfand Oldham St Annes v Sid Outton v Ideal A B I ...

Ovenden v Hensingham Redhili v London Colonials West Hull v East Hull Wigan St Judes v Wigan Rose Br Wigan St Patricks v Halton SC (2.30) Woolston v Gatesheed (2:30).... York Acom v Fryston

EQUESTRIANISM: Olympia Champ-ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Basing-stoke v Bracknell (6:30); Manchester v Ayr (6:40), Notingham v Sheffield (7:0).

LACROSSE: Shepherds Friendly Society Leagua; Pramier division: Boardman and Ecoles v Cheadle, Heaton Mersey v Old Waconians, Slockport v POOL: Mosconi Cup: Europe v America nine-ball challenge (at Dagenham) SWIMMING: ASA national winter championship (at Shattlekt).

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL

Can Stuart Pearce inspire Forest to rise above themselves, against an Arsenal team with no Tony Adams in defence or Patrick Vieira in midfield? Both are bound to be missed, but Martin Keown is fit again to replace Adams. Dennis Bergkamp returns to lend flair to the attack and lan Wright, strangely subdued against Derby. will surely be sharper after a fortnight's rest. This is one game that Arsenal badly need to win to maintain an increasingly valid challenge for the championship. BG

DERBY COUNTY

Derby would have beaten Everton with half-decent finishing on Monday night. There is no question yet of Jim Smith

splitting the partnership of Ward and Sturridge up front, but they will face pressure if Marino Ramberg, Sweden's young player of the year, decides to accept the offer of a two-month loan spell at the Baseball Ground. He recently broke into his full national squad, but will spend the next fortnight on trial with Internazionale before giving Smith a yes or no.

ASTON VILLA

Cyber freaks of a claret-and-blue hue can now purchase the perfect Christmas stocking filler with the launch of the "ultimate CD ROM" interactive guide to Villa. It features, apparently, a unique view of the club, its glorious past, player profiles, a bulletin board and a "virtual" Villa section - all for £27.99. For those more in touch with the real world, and needing a fix of the pre-Yuletide hard stuff, Wimbledon should provide it as the visitors to Villa Park tomorrow

EVERTON

John Scales's decision to join Tottenham after apparently agreeing terms at Elland Road left Leeds frothing; but Everton have not yet forgotten that Nigel Martyn did much the same when he went to Leeds in the summer. "I got the impression that he wanted to join us, but then the agent said "We've got to go see Leeds before you sign'," Cliff Finch, an Everton director, said yesterday, "and that was the last we saw of him." Everton will hope they do not see much of him in a starring role today. PB

BLACKBURN ROVERS

cancellation of Middlesbrough's visit this afternoon enabled Tony Parkes to put off the decision to bring back Tim Flowers until Boxing Day; the move,

though, is likely to confirm Shay Given's decision not to sign a new contract. "He's still having talks with the chairman, but he hasn't signed yet," Parkes said. "He wants first-team football, and he is going to be a top-line 'keeper. I think he'll see out his contract until the summer, then probably go." Sunderland lead the queue.

LEEDS UNITED

Lucas Radebe is an unlikely popular hero, but the South African has emerged as one of the key players in George Graham's revamped line-up in his role as a man-marker. "He's been outstanding in that role," Graham said yesterday. "Look at the people he's marked — Zola, Le Tissier, Sheringham and McManaman, all international class." Radebe's next assignment may be Nick Barmby. Leeds may be able to be more positive soon, with Yeboah close to a comeback. PB

Chelsea are without Frank Lebocul and Dennis Wise, who are suspended, and Gianluca Vialli, who is injured, for the vist of their London rivals. Brushed aside at Leeds and Sunderland, they seem to perform only at home; but at least they now have Eddie Newton back in midfield while Ruud Gullit, if he again decides to play upfront, could threaten a West Ham defence whose parts are greater than the whole. Chelses, though, badly need Di Matteo to recover his form BG

LEICESTER CITY Pontus Kaamark, the Sweden

defender, could make his first starting appearance for 13 months as Martin O'Neill is forced to reshuffle his defence for the visit of Coventry this afternoon. He can expect a rousing reception at Filbert Street after a miserable year. Kaamark damaged knee ligaments in his second game for the club, after a £840,000 move from Gothenburg. against Bolton last November. Injuries to Spencer Prior and Steve Walsh have opened the way for his return

COVENTRY CITY Spirits are high at Highfield Road, after the midweek defeat of Newcastle United, but the biggest banana skin of them all, Woking, still lurks around the corner. Remember Sutton United? Coventry greeted the FA Cup third-round draw with about as much relish as a condemned man eating his last meal "Oh god!" Liam Daish, the City defender, yelped. His subsequent description of Clive Walker, the Woking

LIVERPOOL

striker, as a "poor man's Peter Beardsley", should inspire the Surrey side. RK

Liverpool may have decided not to defend Neil Ruddock against the FA charge of bringing the game into disrepute, after his newspaper article attacking Alan Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, but that lack of support has not chastened the burly central defender. He took over as master of ceremonies at the Liverpool Christmas lunch at the training ground yesterday, leaving the journalists to stand out in the cold watching the jollities, the turkey and mince pies, inside.

PB

Last year, a poor December did not prevent Manchester United

from winning the double. This year, Alex Ferguson knows that his team cannot afford to slip up over the holiday period. "We cannot afford to give away points over Christmas this year." Ferguson said. "With our other commitments, we don't want to be playing catch-up in the Premiership over the second half of the season. We must not allow too big a gap to open up between ourselves and the teams above us." wsPB

MANCHESTER UNITED



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

against each other, and the latter will be

mindful that Pleat's men have already won at Newcastle and Liverpool. When Wednesday do well, the unsung Mark Pembridge often performs wonders in midfield, while

Peter Atherton can prove a most attentive man-marker. That said, Des Walker's handling of Teddy Sheringham promises to

SUNDERLAND

film star, but, today, at Manchester United, his mind should be fully occupied by

keeping Eric Cantona, another cult hero, at bay. The French pair were once team-mates at Nimes, and Perez said: "It will be great to

see Eric again." He will need to be at his

very best because Sunderland have not triumphed at Old Trafford for 29 years -

not since the year Perez was born.

Wearside women have voted

Lionel Perez Sunderland's sexiest player. The goalkeeper apparently fancies a career as a

be the duel of the match.

Wednesday's trip to Tottenham

pits two of the league's more thoughtful tacticians, David

Pleat and Gerry Francis,

With 19 professionals either injured or victims of a flu-type virus, today's game at Blackburn was postponed yesterday lunchtime. The illness strikes at the end of a year in which Middlesbrough have won just five Premiership fixtures and during a run where they have gone 12 league games without victory. Meanwhile Bryan Robson, the manager, has Vladimir Kinder, from Slovakia, on trial along with Fabinho

(cousin of the wayward Emerson), who

may be retained as a reserve.

MIDDLESBROUGH

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Newcastle seem determined to rub shoulders with Europe's best. They could do with winning some silverware, though, and the home engagement against Liver-pool on Monday is undoubtedly one of the pivotal fixtures. Disgusted by their defeat at Coventry this week, Kevin Keegan sat sulking on his own in the team bus. Two men central to the outcome are Alan Shearer and Neil Ruddock, his likely Liverpool marker, one of whose children has the Newcastle No 9 as godfather. LT

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Pigs were reported flying over the City Ground yesterday when Irving Korn, the chair-man, told journalists assemb-led for the unveiling of Stuart Pearce as carefaker-manager that the club was not, after all, in crisis. Just paper talk, he explained Forest set a record this week after a sixteenth successive Premiership game without a win, sit bottom of the table, and are unable to move in the transfer market until the takeover is complete. It is time Korn realised the gravity of matters. RH

HOW THEY STAND

			Goal	Last tive
1 Liverpool	P	Pis	diff	ige games
1 Liverpool	18	37	+18-	DWLWW-
2 Arsenal	17	35	+18	LWWWD,
3 Wimbledon				
4 Newcastie	17	30	+8	DDLDL
5 Aston Villa	17	30	+7	LWWW
5 Aston Villa	17	28	+7	WDWDD - · ·
7 Everton	17	27.	—~4 6 ∵	- DAVIDW
8 Chelsea 9 Shefield Wed	17	25	-1_	DOLL
9 Sheffield Wed	17	25	-1 -	MEEL ST
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1 Derby	17	22	· - <u>1</u>	WI IWA
2 Leicester	17	21	-5	WIND
3 Leeds	17:	21	5::	LWWDD ~
4 Sunderland	17	-20		TIMIM
5 West Ham	17	18	-7	יווטטט
6 Middlesbrough	18	15	-12	DUDL
7 Blackburn	77	13	5	DUWUL
8 Sourcempion]_	. TO	-5	CHAIL S
9 Covenby	!/	13	- 12	DULW
0 Nattm Forest	17	្ចាប .	15	TOTAL .
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SOUTHAMPTON

So farewell then, Aly Dia, whose "recommendation" to Southampton by George Weah" proved bogus. Transferlisted Neil Maddison has a new lease of life and captained the side on Wednesday for the first time in his ten years at The Dell. Graeme Souness is happy to have versatile performers available, especially as a cartilage operation forces Dodd to miss the holiday programme. Monkou replaces the suspended van Gobbel and Neilson could return, but not Le Tissier NS

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Nice to see you, to see you, nice ... devotees of White Hart Lane are likely to get their first view of new boys John Scales and Steffen Iversen this afternoon, when Sheffield Wednesday come a-visiting. Scales survived a hostile reception at Leeds United last Saturday, and a 90-minute runout for the reserves against Bristol Rovers in midweek, while Iversen has safely negotiated two away matches. "I am fairly happy so far," Iversen said. "Once I get to know everyone, it will be better."



WEST HAM UNITED Iain Dowie has long been the

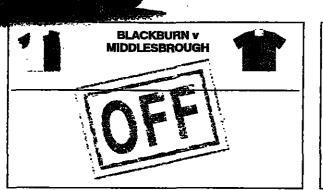
butt of terrace humour, and his own goal against Stockport County will not help, but no one can doubt his honesty - or his courage.

It was revealed yesterday that Dowie had tried to play on and atone for his error on a broken right leg. He will be out for up to 12 weeks, but will be at Stamford Bridge today on crutches. "It was a bit foolish to try to stay on." he said, "but I will live with the mistake for years. There are no excuses. I said I'm sorry — that's all you can do." KP

WIMBLEDON Sam Hammam took the players out last Monday for a

seasonal celebration. "We've had a nice hard week to get it out of us." Robbie Earle, the midfielder. said after training. "It's competitive, but the boys emjoy it, and most stay on and do a bit extra. It's the sign of a happy club." A long, unbeaten, injury-free run helps, of course, and can overcome blips such as the fine of a week's wages imposed on Vinnie Jones by his colleagues for injudicious remarks made to a newspaper last weekend

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Louise Taylor, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough



MANCHESTER UNITED v SUNDERLAND TICKETS: Sold out

HOW THEY LINE UP MANCHESTER UNITED (from): Schmeichel, G Neville, May, Palister, Irvin, Johnsen, Buit, Scholes, Cantona, Solskjær, Giggs, Beckham, P Neville, McClair, Poborsky, van der Gouw.

10-YEAR RECORD: --, --, --, 3-0, --, --, --, --, --

SUNDERLAND (from): Perez, Hall, Kubicki, Melville, Ord, Kelty, Ball, Bracewell, Rae, Gray, Russell, Agnew, Stewart, Aiston, Bridges, Preace.

LEADING SCORERS

13: lan Wright (Arsenal) 10: Alan Shearer (Newcastle), Robbie Fowler (Liverpool) 9: Fabrido Ravenelli (Middlesbrough) 8: Matthew Le Tissler (Southampton), Dwight Yorke (Aston Villa), Elan Ekoku (Wimbledon), Gianluce Vielli (Chelsea) 7: Les Ferdinand (Newca

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

6-4: Liverpool, 11-4: Arsenal, 7-2: Manchester United, 9-2: Newco 16-1; Aston Villa, 25-1; Wimbledon, 25-1; Everion, 33-1; Chelses, 125-1; Tottenham Hotspur. Odds supplied by Ladbrokee

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-cerling.com/



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CHELSEA v WEST HAM TICKETS: Sold out



10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 1-1, --, --, 2-1, --, 2-0, 1-2, 1-2

HOW THEY LINE UP CHELSEA (from): Grodas, Hitchcock, Colgan, Petrescu, Phelan, Johnson, Sinclair, Clarke, Myers, Burley, Minto, Newton, Duberry, Di Matteo, Zola, Nicholls, Gullit, Hughes

WEST HAM (from): Mildosko, Breaker, Dicks, Williamson, Potts, Bishop, Rieper, Raduciou, Rowland, Brown, Moncur, Dumitresco, Bowen, Hughes, Lampard, Billic, Porfirio Mautone, Sealey, Omonimyni, Hodges

NOTTINGHAM FOREST V **ARSENAL** TICKETS: Seats available



HOW THEY LINE UP NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from) Crossley, Lyttle, Pearce, Cooper, Warner, Phillips, Haarland, Woan, Allen, Saunders, Howe,

ARSENAL (probable): Lukic, McGowan, Keown, Linighan, Bould, Winterburn, Garde, Merson, Platt, Bergkamp, Wright, Subs. Hartson, Shaw, Morrow, Parlour, Bartram.



10-YEAR RECORD; 0-0, --, 0-1, 0-3, 1-2, 2-1, 1-0, 0-1, 7-1, 2-0 HOW THEY LINE UP

ASTON VILLA (from): Bosnich, Cakes, Nelson, Wright, Scimaca, Staunton, Ehiogu, Townsend, Draper, Taylor, Yorke, Milosevic, Joachim, Johnson, Tiler, Handria, Famelly. WIMBLEDON (from): Sullivan, Currengham, Blackwell, Peny, Kimble, Ardley, Earle, Jones, Fear, Holdsworth, Leonhardsen,



YACINON

EVERTON v LEEDS

TICKETS: Seats available 10-YEAR RECORD: --, --, --, 2-3, 1-1, 2-0, 1-1, 3-0, 2-0

HOW THEY LINE UP EVERTON (from): Southall, Barrett, Hinchcliffe, Watson, Unsworth, Kanchelskis, Speed, Grant, Parkinson, Ferguson, Brench, Stuart, Short, Barmby, Hottiger, Gerrard, Rideout.

LEEDS (from): Martyn, Kelly, Palmer, Beesley, Radebe, Halle, Sharpe, Wallace, Ford, Bowyer, Rush, Deane, Yebosh, Wetherall, Harte, Kewell, Jackson, Couzens, Beeney

DERBY

HOW THEY LINE UP

SOUTHAMPTON (from): Beasant, Dryden, Lundekvern, Maddison, Berkowic, Magilton, Oakley, Stater, Ostenstaid, Watson, Potter, Monkou, Benall, Hughes, Neilson.

DERBY COUNTY (from). Hoult, Rowelt, McGrath, Stirriac, Laursen, Flynn, Asanovic, D Powell, C Powell, Ward, Sturridge, Dailly, Gebbiadini, Willems, Taylor, Caraley, Yates, Carbon.

NEWCASTLE v

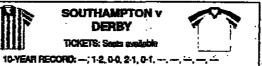
LIVERPOOL

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-2, 1-4, 2-2, --, --, --, 3-0, 1-1, 2-1

HOW THEY LINE UP NEWCASTLE (from): Smicek, Watson, Peacock, Albert, Elliott, Cillespie, Lee, Beardaley, Ginola, Shearer, Ferdinand.

LIVERPOOL (from): James, Whight, Matteo, Ruddock, Babb, McAleer, Thomas, Barnes, Bjornebye, McManaman, Collymore, Fowler, Berger.



Borrows, Boland, Genaux, Flan.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR Y SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY TICKETS: Seats available

LEICESTER V

COVENTRY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, --, --, --, --, --, --, 2-2, --

HOW THEY LINE UP

LEICESTER (from): Keller, Grayson, Watts, Prior, Kaamerk, Marshall, Izzet, Lennon, Parker, Clandge, Taylor, Heskey, Campbell, Wilson, Poole, Lawrence, Lewis.

COVENTRY (from): Ogrizovic, Teller, Daish, Dublin, Shaw, Williams, Richardson, McAllister, Salako, Whelan, Huckerby, Jess,

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 2-0, 0-0, 3-0, --, 0-2, 0-2, 1-3, 3-1, 1-0

HOW THEY LINE UP TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): Walker, Carr, Campbell, Fox, Caldenwood, Wilson, Howells, Nielsen, Dozzell, Sinton, Sheringham, Iversen, Scales, Allen, Nethercott, Rosenthal,

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): Pressman, Noten, Nicol, Atherton, Welker, Stelenovic, Pambridge, Whittingham, Hyde, Carbone, Booth, Hirst, Blinker, Clarke, Oakes, Trustfull, Humphreys, Donaldson, Linighan.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

10.40pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (highlights)

11.00cm Sky Spects Gods on Sunday 4pm Sky Sports Ford Escert Super Sunday Aston Villa v Wimbledon (Rvs)

Som Sky Sports Ford Escort Monday night football Newcastle V Liverpool (Eve)

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Shilton, the Peter Pan of football, plays his thousandth league match tomorrow. "In that critical second in the striker's mind, he looks as unpassable as King Kong."

Goalkeeping legend in a league of his own once. There have been fewer than MOST LEAGUE APPEARANCES

LEYTON ORIENT

he queues for the signature of Peter Leslie Shilton were longer than for Santa's grotto, which says something for the enduring attraction of England's oldest active professional footballer, as well as the proper priorities of Christmas shoppers at the Lakeside centre in Essex. After all, it is not every day that the dash from Marks & Spencer to Pizza Hut is blocked by a footballing legend: 1.000 league games, come Leyton Orient's home match against Brighton tomorrow afternoon, 47 years, 125 England caps.

About 100 strong for the whole hour, the line shuffled slowly

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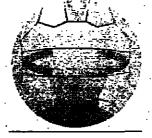
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towards the familiar, dark figure hunched over a desk piled high with postcards. Shilton took trouble over each request, engaged in endless small talk and conducted himself with the professionalism that has marked his playing career. His hands are surprisingly delicate and undamaged, considering the sort of punishment a litany of great strikers have given them over the past 30 years, but the pen still seemed as small as a pin in his fist.

David Seaman? You should have seen this bloke," a father have a look-in if Shilts had been in his prime." Shilton looked on benignly, considering the compliment, then turned a weary eye to the next in line, a West Ham United PETER SHILTON

THE FACE OF **FOOTBALL**



By Andrew Longmore

fan, who remembered Shilton from his Leicester City days and had been cursing him ever since. Briefly, they swapped memories.

Who was that bloke ... darkhaired, stocky, striker who used to play for you way back? Shilton asked. They settled on Brian Dear. "I remember a game we had in my early days. West Ham hardly got a the end he nicked one past me, went in off the post." After all these years, it still hurts. "Any goal that gets past me, for club or country, I treat as a personal disaster," he confided most, on the field at least. Satisfied, the signed photograph in hand, the West Ham man

retreats, wishing Shilton luck for tomorrow. "He's done us a few times, he has," he said, turning back for a final look. "Remember that cup game against Stoke when he saved that penalty from Hurst? No idea to this day how he did that." He shook his head in the manner of so many thwarted strikers down the years. "One of the greats, you know." Who was the photo for? "Me son, he's 32." He was two when Shilton made his first Football League appearance. against Everton, at the age of 16. Leicester won 3-0.

In the background, Barry Hearn, who has lured Shilton from West Ham's reserves and back into first-, team football with Orient, looks on like a doting grandfather. His hair has not weathered as well, as Shilton's. "He's only a year younger than me and his stretching routine makes me feel tired," he said. "I swapped Les Sealey for him three weeks ago, the best piece of business I've done in years. He made six world-class saves against is we don't have to worry about our end any more. We just have to score in theirs."

Brian Clough said much the same when Nottingham Forest looked as unpassable as King

SHILTON'S RECORD LEICESTER CITY STOKE CITY NOTTINGHAM FOREST SOUTHAMPTON **DERBY COUNTY** PLYMOUTH ARGYLE **BOLTON WANDERERS**

SHILTON'S LANDMARKS Born: Leicester, Sept 18, 1949. Height: 6ft. Weight: 14st 2lb. Club debut May 4, 1966 (Leicester City v Everton): England debut: Nov 25, 1971 (v East Germany).

England record: 125 apps (a record). Under-23: 13 apps Football League XI: 4 apps. Nov 1974: Transferred to Stoke City for goalks world record fee of 325,000.

won the championship, straight up from the second division, in 1978 and Shilton kept 25 clean sheets. "He cost me £270,000 and he was worth every penny," Clough wrote his old team-mate. "He always had a thing about in his autobiography. "A good goalkeeper can save you 18 points a

season and he was a class act." These days, you start negotiating "The bigger the better," seems to be the motto. Shilton lacked height, but not width. In that critical split second in the striker's mind, he Kong. Peter Withe, the centre forward in the championship sides of both Forest and Aston Villa, had a better record than most against

being bigger than he is." he said. "At the top of his game, he gave the impression he was oft 2in or 6ft 3in, his boots. He was just so agile and he worked so hard.

"At Forest, he used to pull off save after save, and we would be thinking: 'Flipping 'eck. he's turn-

ing cartwheels for us, we'd better do something here. When you have a keeper like that behind you, it gives everyone a boost, and it didn't half sicken off the strikers in the

999: Peter Shifton

762: Roy Sproson

758: Ray Clemence

SHILTON'S HONOURS

EUROPEAN CUP: 1979 and 1980 (Nottingham Forest).

758: Billy Bonds

LEAGUE CUP: Winner (1979, Nottingham Forest). Finalist (1980, Nottingham Forest). SECOND DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP: 1971

CHAMPIONSHIP: 1978 (Nottingham Forest).

FA CUP: Finalist (1969, Leicester City).

PFA FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR: 1978.

MBE: appointed 1986. OBE: appointed 1990.

777:

770:

764:

Terry Paine

Alan Qakes

John Trollape

Jimmy Dickinson

Robbie James

Tommy Hutchinson

other team." Without Ray Clemence and the dithering of successive England managers, Shilton might have won refused to believe that anyone was better than him when he was briefly the England goalkeeping coach under Graham Taylor.

Shilton had many character

failings. The list of his off-field misdemeanours is as long as his collection of clubs — Orient is his eleventh — and almost as varied. But self-belief travelled with him every step of the way. He still harbours a quaint dream that he might play in the Premiership again. Probably not with Leyton Orient.

What was so strange about Shilton was that his extraordinary sense of discipline dissolved the moment he crossed the white line back to reality. He was as profligate off the field as he was miserly on it. He won his battle with alcohol, but his domestic life kept the tabloids in headlines and he is still laden with debt. A chat with the great man this week cost about 25p

a league game. Back at the Lakeside, a pale young man with a bad cough stands in the miniature goal, fielding shots from passing children. Luke Weaver, Orient's reserve goalkeeper, 17, has had his immediate ambitions blocked by the arrival of the newcomer, but every Monday and Thursday he trains and listens and watches, aware that this is a priceless investment in his used to go down uture. Watford with Peter Bonetti, but this is better," he said. "He still works hard and his reflexes are still sharp. Not a bad guy to be dropped for.

over postponement

By Peter Ball

THESE are bad days for Middlesbrough. As if errant Brazilians and a leaky defence did not offer problems enough, injuries and a viral epidemic yesterday persuaded them to postpone this afternoon's away game against Blackburn Rovers, and they will face an FA Premier League disciplinary hearing

in the new year.

Mike Lee, the FA Premier League spokesman, said in a statement: "The FA Premier League had no discretion to approve such a postponement, and the rules clearly state that a club is obliged to fulfil its fixture obligations." Under-standably, Blackburn reacted angrily to Middlesbrough's

This is a big decision now for the Premier League," Tom Finn, the Blackburn secretary, said yesterday. "I can understand that smaller clubs sometimes can't field a team, but in these days of £20 million turnovers, and multimillion pound teams, you should have squads to cope with such eventualities. It is a huge issue of the Premiership's cre-

Middlesbrough have 17 players fit, although three are goalkeepers and five are young players not yet in the first team squad. In their present predicament, without a Premiership win in 12 games, they clearly felt that that is not enough.

"We could not have done ourselves justice," Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, said yesterday. "I would have had to include six debutants, and that would not have been fair to anyone. Not one of those players are over 20 years

Middlesbrough's reluctance to play in those circumstances. with Juninho, Pearson, Vickers, Fleming, Stamp and Moore among the injured, Beck and Whyte among the flu sufferers, can be understood. but it is hard to avoid the feeling that that is the luck of the draw. "It would be unfair to the playing public to go ahead," Robson claimed; but the Blackburn public, the majority of the expected crowd, might not agree.

Certainly, with Middles-brough on a bad run, and Blackburn improving, the home club officials were eager for the game to be played. We've got a huge game on Boxing Day against New-castle," Finn said, "and nowthis puts even extra pressure on that one, because we could be in the bottom three through no fault of our own."

Blackburn's unhappiness was not helped by not learning of the postponement officially from the Premier League of fice until after the supporters had heard on the lunchtime

With no provision for the League to grant a postpone-ment, Middlesbrough have been charged with a breach of regulations and will face a disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary panel, by contrast, has wide discretionary powers, and could do anything from finding that there were extenuating circumstances for Middlesbrough's action to fining the club, deducting points, or indeed awarding the match to Blackburn. "If the



Premier League starts talking about just financial penalties, I'm sorry, but that just isn't sufficient," Finn said.

With Liverpool and Newcastle United meeting at St James' Park on Monday, there is an opportunity today for Arsenal, Manchester United and Everton to make things even tighter at the top. Aston Villa and Wimbledon will meet tomorrow in the only other game between two of the leading clubs.

A visit from Arsenal is

usually the last thing that a club in turmoil wants, but Stuart Pearce may regard today being as good a time as any to face them. Injuries and suspensions mean that Arsenal will be without Dixon and Adams from their back five and Vicira from midfield. Bergkamp and Keown return, and Remi Garde, Arsène Wenger's other French signing, stands by to make his

debut in Vieira's place. Manchester United lace Sunderland at Old Trafford, knowing that their Premiership credentials are on the line, with Alex Ferguson warning that they cannot afford to slip any further behind. At full strength they are probably the strongest team in the league, but the injuries to Keane and Cole have left them looking less than totally

convincing. Keane, however, has begun jogging and is expected to make his comeback on New Year's Day and Cole will play in a rearranged reserve match on Monday. They cannot return too quickly for United.

West Ham United go to Chelsea without their striker, Iain Dowie, whose unhappy week was complete yesterday when it was confirmed that he had broken an ankle in the Coca-Cola Cup tie at Stockport on Wednesday as well as scoring an own goal. West Ham have taken Mike Newell, the Birmingham City for-

Middlesbrough in dock Repentant Weah says moment of madness will never be repeated

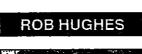
eorge Weah, is unar-guably a model of his time. He is already the 1996 world, European and African footballer of the year. He has since crafted perhaps the finest goal in the history of the game, running from his own penalty box through seven gentlemen of Verona to finish with incomparable athleticism, breathtaking composure. And, when the new year polls are counted, either he, Alan Shearer, or Ronaldo, the astonishing young Brazilian of Barcelona, will be next year's world No I.

Imagine, then, George Weah writing the most humbling of letters to Fifa, the world governing body of his

"I am writing to you to apologise for the unfortunate situation that occurred in Porto," he began his letter two days ago to Sepp Blatter, the Fifa general secretary. "Please extend my deepest regrets to Fifa and the entire football body for the situation. epecially since you chose to give me the Fair Play Award

"You have given me the greatest honour and because of a moment of craziness through provocation. I have caused you embarrassment I have always viewed football as a sport for unification for now and for tomorrow unification in the sense of bringing people together and that concept will always remain in my head through-

out my career and after." It was because of the way in which Weah used his head lost it, in fact - that he was having now to craft such an apology. On November 20 Weah broke the nose of Jorge Costa, the Porto defender. with a savage butt in the tunnel after a Champions' League match. AC Milan, who pay Weah's wages, audaciously tried to tell the world that nothing significant had-taken place; Weah, his wife and other witnesses maintained that the headbutt was a





Weekend View

reaction to serious foul play perpetrated against Weah by Costa in both meetings of the teams and, Weah still insists, severe racial taunting from

the Portuguese. Uefa added five more matches to Weah's one-match suspension this week. However, the governing body of European football did not take action against Costa. Rene Eberle, the disciplinary committee secretary, said that there was no proof of the

alleged racial remarks.

The decision has enraged not only Weah's family but also the minister for sport and youth in Liberia, his homeland. "I am appalled, sadMassaquoi said this week. They are punishing Weah. but what are they going to do

with Costa? Are they not going to punish him because he is a white boy?" Oh dear. The politician furthers his intervention by speculating that Uefa and Fifa have concocted the punishments so that they can avoid giving an African the prestigious award for the second year running. How one wishes that the politician, particularly one from a land which had ostracised Weah until his fame became so beneficial,

had kept quiet. In fact, almost the opposite has happened. Weah was given the award last year, when he won little of import. precisely because it was a fallow year in the sport, and a gesture towards the rising continent of the game could

be made. Moreover, João Havelange. stubbornly proving that, at 80, he remains a law unto himself, said last week: "Fifa has selected the Liberian [Weah] for its fair-play award and will not change that decision. A gesture in reaction that was provoked cannot cancel out ien years of fair play everywhere and in every competition."

When it was suggested to Havelange that



Weah in action for AC Milan against Porto last month

tated, the Fifa overlord retorted: "Nonsense."

So, while there is proof that

one of the greatest players in

the game committed common

assault on an aggressive op-

ponent, the judgments sug-

gest that, if Costa were to

follow through his threat to

take Weah to court, the de-

fence would be very thin. And

the game, inevitably, would

If there was racism, it

should be condemned. Uefa

failed appallingly to deal with

this during Euro %, when Hristo Stoikhov, of Bulgaria,

admitted that he had used

racist remarks to taunt Mar-

cel Desailly, of France. "Ev-

eryone does it." Stoikhov said.

o sir, they do not. But it is a sad reflection on the most popular

game played on earth that men will stoop to such meth-

ods, methods of cheats and

biggots. And the response

within football has been no

where near universal: for

example, Hussein Ali, of Ku-

wait, has been suspended for

a year and fined 5,000 Swiss

francs (£2,500) by Fifa for

verbally abusing and spitting

We have, sadly, come an

awful long way from the days

of Tom Finney and Pele -

men who would be

colourblind so far as their race

is concerned. They have re-

spect for their game, for one

another, and Finney spoke of

"ambassadors" yeslerday. So

happen again, I will make it

my special duty to teach

youngsters coming up in the

football world that, even

though temptation exists at

times within the game, fight-

ing is not the solution. I will

never make you ashamed of

me again. I will always be

grateful for all you have done

He signed himself: "George

Weah, Liberia Sports

to uplift my career."

The situation will never

does Weah in his letter:

at a referee.

By Our Sports Staff

Samaranch

plays down

Fifa threat

to withdraw

JUAN Antonio Samaranch. president of the International Olympic Committee, said yesterday that he was not worried by a threat to withdraw football from the Olympic Games. "There hasn't really been any danger that the sport could disappear from the Olympics." Samaranch said.

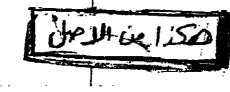
Samaranch was responding to comments by João Havelange, the president of Fifa, football's world governing body, who criticised the sport's role in the Olympics and the organisation of the

Atlanta tournament. Havelange had said that football had gained nothing financially from the Atlanta Games and could be oulled out of the Olympics if it continued to be "marginalised".

Officals in Abu Dhabi yesterday defended the quality of football on display at the Asian Cup in response to a report, being prepared for Fifa, that is critical of the standard. The early draft of the report, prepared by a leading Western coach, suggests that Asian football is not progressing and is critical of the performances of South

Korea and Japan in the cup. "We know about the report and we are expecting it soon after the end of the tourna-. ment," Jurg Nepfer, head of Fifa's technical department in Zurich, said yesterday.

The Asian Football Confedcration (AFC) has been especially upset over the criticism of South Korea and Japan, who will co-host the 2002 World Cup. "The AFC has nothing to fear where the quality of football is concerned as demonstrated by the excellent performances of Japan and Korea at the Atlantic Olympics and by Korea and Saudi Arabia at the 1994 World Cup," Peter Velappan, secretary of the AFC, said.





RUGBY UNION 34 Bath looking to rise above internal strife

SPORT

Can you help to pick the game's greatest moments?



SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996

Crawley forms strong alliance with vice-captain to force Zimbabwe onto defensive

Hussain puts England in driving seat

FROM SIMON WILDE IN BULAWAYO

BULAWAYO (third day of five): England, with six first-70 runs behind Zimbabwe

THERE is sometimes a fine line between success and fail-ure and Nasser Hussain tiptoed along it precariously on the third day of the first Test at

Queens Club here yesterday.

The England vice-captain turned the first ball he faced, from Paul Strang, down off his hip and saw it slip through the fingers of Stuart Carlisle crouched three feet away at short leg. Had the catch stuck, England would have been 92 for three in reply to Zimbabwe's 376. They would have been on the run. Instead Hussain stayed - and stayed and stayed. For the next five hours he battled away, withstanding the loss of two partners in disheartening fashion to claw England back into the match. At the start of play. bookmakers had judged them to be 20-1 outsiders, yet at stumps yesterday they were in a position from which they may well yet, sometime tomor-

row, force a win.

Shortly before the close Hussain reached a richly deserved century and will resume this morning with England on 306 for four, his own innings worth 101 and his partnership with John Crawley worth 126, Crawley having played beautifully for three hours for his 51. With the pitch turning, England need to bat well today to build a substantial lead and give themselves a realistic chance of beating opponents whose temperaments they have reason to believe are suspect under pressure.

The most encouraging aspect of the batting of Hussain and Crawley, neither of whom

was in the England side when it last played a Test overseas, was their willingness to graft in unfavourable conditions. knowing also that after them there is little batting to come. With the pitch having less life in it than expected, the ball did not come on to the bat and, with the fields spread, there

was no option but to chisel out

the runs. As expected, the main threat to England's well-being came from Strang; the promising Zimbabwe leg spin bowler, who was never treated with anything less than respect. He took two of the three wickets to fall yesterday as England advanced their score to 238 and caused Hussain, who admitted to not being able to read Strang every time, to twice more tiptoe along the thin line

before a third century in six

Tests was his. Twice after reaching his half-century Hussain narrowly escaped. The first time he swept within inches of Houghton, who spent some of the day off the field with back trouble, and the second time spooned an attempted pull over the head of Whittall, who might have moved more

quickly at mid-on. Crawley, on the other hand. appeared to pick Strang every time, confirming his reputation as the best player of leg spin in the England side alongside Atherton. He has given the impression on this tour that he is on the brink of transforming himself from a batsman of promise into one of real stature.

The only other bowler seriously troubling England was Streak, who began the day with a disappointing spell but especially with the new ball 80 minutes before the close. But he lacks the vitality that brought him so many wickets

in the past two years and there is no reason why Hussain and Crawley should not carry on in the same vein today.

That England were in trouble earlier in the day was not all of their own making. The second wicket to fall, which left them precariously placed at 160 for three — which soon became 180 for four - was the result of a most unfortunate blunder by Ian Robinson, the home umpire, who is not having a happy match.

Stewart was on the receiv-ing end and will rue his ill luck all the more as he had spent the morning playing himself in and began the afternoon brightly, he and Hussain scoring freely against Bryan Strang and Olonga. To stem the flow of runs, Paul Strang was recalled and in his first over Stewart, on 48, pushed his left leg down the pitch and missed an attempted sweep.

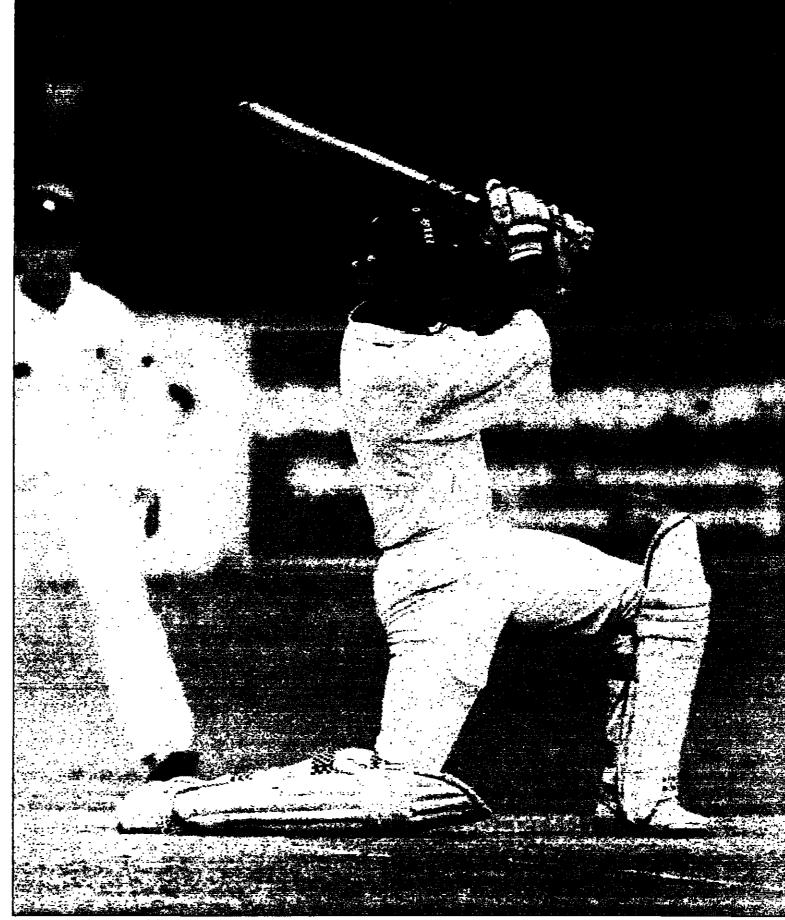
The ball, a leg break, struck Stewart's pad in line with off stump and arguably would have not only gone on to miss that stump but also another entire set as well. It was the third questionable decision Robinson has made, the two earlier ones having

worked to England's advantage. Waller was adjudged caught at short leg on the first day off a ball that appeared to hit only his pad. And 30 minutes into play yesterday Knight was reprieved on 48 when he misread Paul Strang's googly and was struck on his back pad. Knight was showing less enterprise than he had the previous afternoon and fell for the addition of only eight more runs, leg-before to Olonga's slower ball. Olonga is only 20 years of age and a raw operator, but this was a fine

> Knight comprehensively. Stewart's unfortunate that of Thorpe, who could have no complaint about the manner of his going. He was the victim of perhaps Strang's best ball of the day, a googly that bamboozled him completely, beat Andy Flower, the Zimbabwe wicketkeeper, but not the diving Campbell at first slip. It leaves Thorpe more out of form than ever with 143 runs to his name

from eight tour innings.

ball that swung late and beat



Hussain plays powerfully through the covers during his century for England at Queens Club yesterday. Photograph: Stn Forster/Allsport

BULAWAYO SCOREBOARD

ZIMBABWE First Innings 376 (A Flower 112, A D R Campbell 84). ENGLAND First Innings

- N V Knight Ibw b Olonga (104mm, 79 balls, 9 fours) *M A Atherton lbw b P A Strang (57min, 43 balls, 2 lours) +A J Stewart lbw b P A Strang ... (149mm. 123 balls, 8 fours)
- G P Thorpe c Campbell b P A Strang ... (28min, 23 balls, 3 fours)
- J P Crawley not out (183min, 153 balls, 7 lours) Extras (b 4. ib 2. w 1, mb 14). Total (4 wkts. 108 overs, 419min) 308 RDB Croft, D Gough, AD Mulially, CE W Silverwood and P C R Tutnell to bet FALL OF WICKETS 1-48 (Knight 29), 2-92 (Stewart 14), 3-160 (Hussain 24), 4-180 (Hussain 31)

7-0, 5-1-5-9); B C Strang 17-5-54-0 (nb.2; 7 fours; 5-0-21-0, 5-0-22-0, 7-5-11-0); P A Strang 37-10-83-3 (12 fours; 14-4-25-1, 20-6-46-2, 3-0-12-0); Olonga 17-1-72-1 (nb 7, w 1; 10 fours; 1-0-10-0, 6-1-22-1, 5-0-24-0, 5-0-16-0); Whittall 7-2-19-0 (4 fours; one spell); G W Flower 7-3-20-0 (2 fours; one spell)

Compiled by Bill Frindail

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROSS KINNAIRO / ALLSPORT

SCORING NOTES (third day): Lunch: 128-2 (43 overs, 179min; Slewart 29, Hussain 12). Tea: 231-4 (76 overs, 299min; Hussain 61, Crawley 19) Second new ball: 261-4 (88 overs) at 3,32pm Umpires: R S Durine (New Zealand) and I D Richardson Third umpire: R B Tiffin.

BY RICHARD HOBSON

STUART PEARCE has never been one to shirk a challenge, but vesterday he took on what he acknowledges is the biggest test of his football career. when he agreed to become caretaker-manager of Nottingham Forest.

That Pearce should succeed Frank Clark is not exactly a surprise, because at the City Ground he was always seen as the heir apparent. He was recommended to the club's board of directors by Clark, just as Clark had been favoured by Brian Clough three years ago. Nobody, however, could have forseen the perilous circumstances in which Pearce, 34, would take charge.

The problems he faces are immense, with the side bottom of the FA Carling Premiership and the future ownership of the club thrown into new doubt on Thursday night when one of the two consortiums attempting to win the support of shareholders withdrew their takeover bid in the wake of Clark's resignation. Pearce, already player, cap-

tain and Professional Footbali-

ers' Association representat-

Pearce agrees to tackle his hardest task yet ive, said that he will consider whether to stay on in a managerial role in the middle of Pearce said yesterday.

January, and will not do so if he believes that the extra responsibility is affecting his play. Unlike Bryan Robson, Gordon Strachan and, to a lesser extent, Ruud Gullit, he said that he is still a footballer first and manager second. Nor will he relinquish willingly his place in the England squad, even though Glenn Hoddle had to force him out of temporary retirement after the European championship

finals in the summer Alan Hill. Clark's assistant. will undertake the paperwork and the club's business negotiations will be conducted by Irving Korn, the chairman, pending the takeover.

It is, nevertheless, a huge workload, even for a man of such unwavering commitment as Pearce, but he will attempt to tackle it head on. He commands so much authority at the City Ground that Fred Reacher, the former chairman, said at a testimonial dinner in the player's cause earlier this year that Pearce had a "job for life" at the club. "I think you will find that he had drunk a few glasses of wine when he said that,"

For a man often described as an inspirational leader. Pearce is not renowned for his eloquence. He is the archetypplayer's player and his public relations skills will undergo close scrutiny over the coming weeks. Yesterday,

ahead, before revealing that he had secured the loan signing of Nigel Clough, from Manchester City, for a month. "I am sure that Frank would have liked to have signed five or six players, but there is no

sweater, jeans and desert boots, he gave a frank, down-

money available so he had to work with the players he had



cent effort and respec

They might think I am an

easy option because I have

been one of them, but things

will have to be a bit different

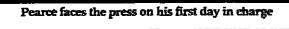
More animated, he conducts training with the players who must now call him "boss'

already and it is the same for me now," Pearce said. "It whether I will enjoy it, or be remains to be seen if these any use. But I do know that players are good enough. I have asked them for 100 per your friends become very few

There was also a moment of vintage Pearce. Asked why Nigel Clough, back where he enjoyed the best days of his career, would not be selected for the home game against Arsenal this afternoon, he glared at his inquisitor and replied sternly: "Because I

That is the role model - the tough guy, the one-time electrician who made good whom supporters know and love. This afternoon he will sprint towards the Trent End and acknowledge the cries of "Psycho. Psycho" by letting out a manic scream of "Come on!" He will clench his fists and raise his arms, his face contorted in passion. There cannot be a greater empathy between any player and his club in English football. The odds are stacked against Pearce, but he will not fall alone

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GRRR AHA MMM'S PORT





Wrap up in style to go to the party shopping - 3

THE TIMES veekena

Champagne prize Jumbo crossword competition . 4



SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996



And lo, a croc appeared

which to quibble about biblical scholarship, but here goes... Is it possible that there was a crocodile present at the birth of the

promise of appearing in a perfect setting a stable with a nativity play celebrating the animals in the stable when abide, cattle expert at lowing.

Jesus was born. Frankly, nei
Admittedly, we had no camel to ther would I wish to break it to the child who came dressed as a goose that nativity plays are generally about oxen, asses and sheep. No room at the inn, surely, for a zoo?

Here we go again... Another Christmas, another farmyard

ur old farmyard is nativity play, more problems, an odd place in Last Christmas, when the animals started to leave our ark as the floodwaters of my farming adventures began to recede, I remember thinking that it would be the farmyard nativity baby Jesus?

Try arguing the case with a six-year-old who has slaved to years ago with the sudden make an animal costume on a realisation that we had here a bring the three Kings, but a Suffolk Punch could do the job instead. We even had an Angel Gabriel, played by the only lad in the village who could blow a fanfare (of sorts) on a trumpet.

We told him to come dressed in

How did all those animals get in on the nativity scene, asks Paul Heiney after his Suffolk farm was turned into a film set. No room at the inn, surely, for a zoo?

was perfect, except for the dry eye in the house.
words "Nuclear Electric" emblazoned across his chest. Ah. different. Television cameras the atom, we said, a fundamental piece of God's creation. No

problem there. Every year the weather was kind to us. Skies cleared in the late afternoon to give us a frosty twilight into which we belted out our carols, and when the girl soprano scaled the cliff face of the straw stack to sing In white and he duly turned up in the Bleak Midwinter into the

were to be there, with piercing lights to illuminate every corner of the barn and farm buildings. And, instead of standing on a bale of straw welcoming a handful of damp neighbours. I am to appear before the entire nation on Christmas morning (ITV, 9.30am) and invite you all to

his gleaming boiler suit, which rising moon, there was not a about "one day on your dressing room they'll pin a star". It was as if the farm had been signed up by Lloyd Webber

lock, livestock and barrel. The producer, Ray Bruce, was insistent that this nativity play should not tread the wellworn path but, instead, examine the role and significance of the animals at the birth of Jesus. "Problem," I said. "Our animals have gone." We've still got the noble carthorses, but if

Muffin the Mule. And there are no cows left to portray the oxen, and surely even the most inventive television producer could not find a role for Alice, the Large Black pig? "Anyway," I said severely, "she's old and deaf and cranky, and the thought of disrupting her daily routine for anything as vulgar as television is out of the question."

No problem. Animals were booked. Mr White brought his cows, Cowslip and Clara, and his two donkeys, Farmer and Melba. "One donkey will do," said the producer, mindful of his budget. He did not know share in the Nativity. Talk he thought I was going to have that these two donkeys are one

them cast as a lowly asses he was mistaken; it would be like showbiz and that Melba with-asking Desert Orchid to play out Farmer is like Abbott without Costello. Worse. Melba would kick the place down if Farmer wasn't there to keep her company. Hence two donkeys rather than the usual one.

Then the sheep arrived. My old flock came cascading down the ramp of the trailer and into the farmyard, charging round, knocking things over like children on a return visit to their old school. Suddenly it was more Resurrection than Nativity. The old farmyard was alive again with the sounds and smells of livestock; the ghosts of Christmases past coming to haunt me. But are animals really

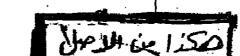
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SHOPPING 23 GARDENING 45 PROPERTY 67 SALES GUIDE 8,9 HOME LIFE 10 COUNTRY LIFE 12 TRAVEL 13-18 GAMES 19

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hristmas Eve, snow falling. Daddy upstairs doing his bow tie in the full-length mirror. Mummy putting on her pearls and spraying something floral on her neck. Nanny just putting the finishing touches to Floella's hair, and little Cedric looking scrumptious in his sailor suit. The car outside is warm and soft, and waiting to take them to the Trollopes's Christmas bash.

Floella and Cedric are in the car now. Bunty is wishing the Nanny a Merry Christmas, and Daddy just has to grab the Trollopes's presents from under the tree. "Bunty, where did you put the

presents for the Trollopes?" "What do you mean, where did I put them? I told you to buy them." End of Christmas idyll. Festive season ruined. Can't go to the party without presents. Nothing is open except the garage, and you can't very well take them a can of four-star and six microwaveable hotdogs. There is an all-night chemist in King's Cross, but you haven't time to drive three miles for a gift-wrapped party pack of flavoured condoms. This is a job for Supershopper.

For all is by no means lost. At times of crisis your own home can be turned into an extremely pukka impromptu department store.

First of all, hit the book department. Scan the shelves for unread hardbacks of any kind, though this is a risky business because it is a trick everyone knows. A quick glance at the publication date will give this one away, unless you can pass it off as a collectable rarity. One favourite trick of mine is to

SERIOUS SHOPPING

PANIC GIFTS

grab an unread Jeffrey Archer (which, in most homes, will mean any Jeffrey Archer) and scrawl on the frontispiece. Merry Christmas from Jeffrey". They are unlikely to know his signature, and will be mightily impressed.

If something more extravagant is required, take an old copy of any Dickens novel, bash it around a bit and rip out the telltale page with edition dates on, and write, "Best wishes from Charlie" with a leaky pen, splodging some inkspots on it

for authenticity.

Next stop, the perfumery. Your bathroom should contain quite a few unused aftershaves and perfumes from Christmases past, plus



BY GILES COREN

the odd Body Shop gift basket still in its cellophane. Failing this, don't forget that people often run out of loo roll at Christmas, and it can make a timely present.

Right, that's a couple sorted out. Now try clothes. Your best hope is seldom-worn tiems of cashmere or silk. Fold them in tissue paper and, as you hand them over, say: "I got this in Hong Kong". This will explain both the apparent extravagance, and the lack of packaging.

Do not forget to remove labels. Another winner is jewellery. There are bound to be pairs of earrings around that are never worn because they are either unattractive or allergenic. Nobody throws jewellery boxes away, so find a nice one, and it will mask the inadequacy of the contents.

Next stop, hat shelf in coat cupboard. Here you should find

never-played board games, such as "Over the Hill — the Midlife Crisis Game," and "Lenny Henry's Stand-up Comedy Game". These are intended to make you laugh when you look at the box, but not to be played. Only acceptable if the cellophane is still intact.

Pictures: take any Victorian print from a spare bedroom. The chances are the receiver will not have seen it before and, if they have, they will not remember where, and will assume they have remembered it because it is lamous, and therefore valuable. You can wrap this in newspaper, as print shops often do.

Now hit the food hall. Larders and kitchen cupboards can be a hive of giveable goodies. But there are rules. Acceptable foods to give include pannetone, tinned cas-

soulet or confit d'oie from Fauchon, Soupe de Poisson in a jar, whole cheeses, rare mustards and small herb trees in pots.

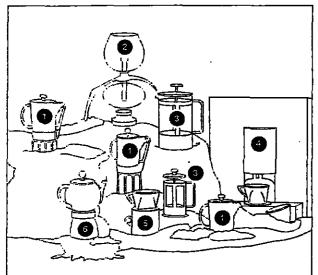
Quite unacceptable are things such as half-finished jars of Mrs Elswood's haimisha pickled cucumbers, pieces of cheese, tinned meat products such as Spam, pasta sauces and frozen chickens. If all else fails, remember that "retro" is "in". Old bakelite telephones, taps, door knockers, Hoovers and early plastic swing-bins can all make a wonderful gift for the stylish home. Got an old kitchen chair that doesn't go with the new look from Magnet? Well,

people always need chairs. So don't let last-minute shopping worries spoil your Christmas this year. And remember, it's the thought that counts.

Coffee break choice

THE PREPARATION of a cup of coffee is a wonderful ritual. It begins with the bean — which roast and blend to choose and how to have it ground - and continues through to the method used for making it: filter, plunger, or perculator.

Whatever your needs or passion, here is a selection of what is on offer in the shops to help you achieve that perfect coffee-shop taste. SUE PARKER



1 Stove-top espresso coffee maker with ceramic jug, £19.50, from John Lewis Partnership (0171-629 7711 for branches). 2 Glass cona coffee maker, £65, from the Algerian Coffee Store, 52 Compton Street, London WC2 (0171-437 2480); this works by the vacuum method - light the spirit burner beneath and the bubbling hot water at the bottom swaps places with the coffee at the top. 3 Bodum Kerrya range of plunger-style coffee makers: three-cup £9.99, 12-cup £19 99, in brightly coloured plastic holders from the Bodum Shop, 24 Neal Street, London WC2 (0171-240 9176). 4 Gaggia Automatica, £695, from the Algerian Coffee Stores (as above); the coffee is freshly ground in the machine for each cup and it has several settings for strength and the number of cups required. 5 Simple ceramic onecup litter which fits on top of your mug, £7.60, from the Monmouth Coffee Shop, 27 Monmouth Street, London WC2 (0171-836 5272). 6 La Signora polished aluminium stove-top espresso maker, from £13.95 for one-cup up to £28.50 for 12-cup, from The Home, Salts Mill, Victoria Road, Saltaire. Bradford (mail order, 01274 530770).



'Donkeys know Christmas is theirs'

Continued from page I necessary if the intention of a nativity play is a reconstruction of the birth of Jesus? Not if you take St Luke as your guide. His account of the birth of Jesus beginning. And it came to pass that a decree went out..., is the script on which every nativity play is based. But St Luke mentions no animals; certainly

no ox or ass; and there is no reference

to sheep, only shepherds.

evertheless, everyone from Old Master to schoolchild who has tried to recreate the Nativity, whether on canvas, stained glass or cardboard, has the infant, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, ox and ass looking

on. They did not get it from St Luke. But it has come from somewhere, and has power, this image of farmyard animals at the crib. It is almost always there: from the lowing cattle in Away in a Manger to Hardy's poem about the oxen kneeling at midnight.

We pictured the meek, mild crea-

They dwelt in their strawy pen. Nor did it occur to one of us there To doubt that they were kneeling

According to producer Ray Bruce's meticulous research, the animals became more and more prominent in the story of the birth of Jesus as the centuries went by. Perhaps to St Luke and his contemporaries the presence of livestock in a stable was so commonplace that it was hardly worth recording. But writing in the 8th century, Pseudo-Matthew (in an apocryphal

version of the Gospels) said:

And on the third day after the birth... Mary went out of the cave and, entering a stable, placed the child in the manger, and the ox and the ass... incessantly adored Him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Habakkuk the prophet saying. Between two animals you are made manifest"."

Since then, the ox and ass have stolen the show. There is now hardly a nativity depiction in which they do not appear. On Roman sarcophagi they are there to the exclusion even of Mary. Other animals come and go, like the camels which appeared in Rubens's Adoration of the Magi, or the dove representing the Holy Ghost in some schools of art, but the ox and the ass are never eclipsed. They move ever closer



Camels replace the oxen and asses in Rubens's Adoration of the Magi

Cover photograph of schoolchildren playing Mary, Joseph and a crocodile in the nativity stable, by JACK DANIELS

ing the first of the control of the

to the baby Jesus. By the 11th century the ox can be found actually standing on the manger in which the child lies. eating the hay; there are also images to be found of the ox and the ass eating the swaddling clothes abandoned by Jesus. It is not clear whether this is some spiritual representation, or the work of an artist who knew a thing or

two about the behaviour of donkeys. One vital link in the chain of events which started with Pseudo-Matthew's ox and ass, and eventually led to a child dressed as a crocodile turning up on our farm last week, is provided by St Francis of Assisi.

in the early 13th century, three years before he died, St Francis celebrated the birth of Jesus in a manner we would recognise today. In A Short Life against plague."

St Francis embraced Christmas like no one before him, calling it the "feast

nativity play is described: "... he made ready a manger and told the people to bring hay and also an ox and an ass. When all were assembled for Christ's Mass, this Feast was celebrated. Francis standing before the manger and overflowing with joy even to tears... (an observer) declared that he saw a little child of exceeding beauty sleeping in that manger, who woke from his infant sleep when Francis stretched his arms to Him. The people of Greccio said that the hay which was used at that manger afterwards cured sick beasts, and was a marvellous remedy

of feasts". With his heart and mind brimming with his belief that all of of St Francis of Assisi, the first ever God's creation, man and beast, was

deserving of similar respect he de-clared one Christmas that, "If I could speak to the emperor, I would ask that a general law be made that all who can should scatter corn and grain along the roads so that the birds and animals might have an abundance of food on the day of such great solemnity.

especially our sisters the larks". Which fondness for larks, perhaps, contributed to the eventual decree which went out from the television producer that the pupils of Hardwick Middle School in Bury St Edmunds should dress as the animals of their choice and come to our nativity play, to satisfy the longing of St Francis for all

creation to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
The choir of St Edmundsbury Cathedral came, too, to sing glorious carols in the barn, which until then had echoed only to the muttered oaths of farmworkers, the squeaking of mice and the occasional hoot of the owl. Martin Shaw, canon of St Edmundsbury, came too and tried to deliver a thoughtful homily while being towed around by a violently

unco-operative goat. nd thus it came to pass that there came among the ani-mals and the film crew a crocodile whose mask fitted so tightly that at one stage the poor

One thing you will not see on the Christmas morning television show is the horrified look on the face of Melba the donkey when the crocodile first

approached the crib. Donkeys clearly know that Christmas is their time of year, and the thought that scholars centuries hence might look back at carefully preserved archive video and celebrate a lumpy. leathery-skinned creature with an oversized shout as being as much a part of the nativity scene was just too much for Melba to bear. She bucked and reared and threatened to upset the manger and kick out all the lights.

To cool the situation. I took my inspiration from St Francis and ordered that corn and grain might be spread so that the animals could feast in abundance. This guaranteed peace on earth and goodwill to all, at least till the crocodile was safely on the school bus heading homeward.

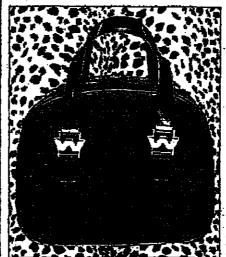
Away in a Manger, produced by Ray Bruce of CTVC, can be seen on ITV on Christmas Day at 9.30am.

THREE OF A KIND

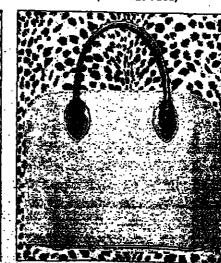
AS WITNESSED on the catwalks of Milan and Paris this season, the holdall shopper is the bag for the girl who has a little more than everything. Here are three of the best to suit every price range.



Bronze and black suede leather shopping bag, £265, from Armando Pollini, 35 Brook Street, London W1 (0171-629 7606)



Black rylon bowling bag, £105, Wannabe by Patrick Cox. Dickins & Jones, Regent Street, London W1 (0171-734 7070)



Moss moleskin and tan leather trim bag, £59.50, Franchetti Bond, 7 The Burlington Arcade, London W1; 35 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (mail order, 0171-924 2602)



All wrapped up and ready to party



Heath Brown looks at what to wear over an evening dress

so you can keep warm

and still look stylish

arty clothes should al-ways have that feelglam factor, even if it's the cover-up coat you'll be wearing in the taxi on the way there.

But it's so easy to get it wrong. Clashing hem-lengths, ugly mixes of fabrics, down-atheel jackets that go to the office each day - women have seen and worn them all.

The choices for covering up. those freezing shoulders are many. Elegant evening coats are the obvious option but can be a little too expensive for. such infrequent use. Conversely, reverting to your trusty daytime greatcoat or overcoat denies you a glamorous entrance and rarely goes well with delicate silks, satins or

The best buys are coats that can double up to be worn for other occasions.

Susie Faux, of the image consultancy Wardrobe, recommends a luxuriously soft, long, black cashmere or light wool day coat. "This can be a simple answer to covering a long evening gown," she says,
"and a long-term clothing
investment for both day and

But avoid unneccessary decoration. Often, good, plain, long coats such as those from the La Redoute catalogue (prices start from £145). Marks & Spencer (about £140) and Mulberry (about £495) will



detailing and are not too dressy for the day but anony-mous enough for evening — and they will not date quickly. so they will be still looking

Oasis offers a full-length black coat, with fur-trimmed collar and cuffs (£119.99). Or you could add a fake fur collar to your neckline, as shown below, by Jackson (£59), with a

for are either long-line coats or more romantic capes. But beware, capes and cloaks are an acquired taste: they can look stunning but there is a danger of appearing too much like you are going to a fancy dress party — a sort of Mystic-Meg-cum-Moll-Flanders look. To avoid this, drape your cape over modern, sexy, slight-

ly clubby minimal outfits in

TOP LEFT: Red velvet cape, £479, by Wonderful Wraps at Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-730 1234). Lurex vest with belt, £29.99, from Oasis (as above) spired choices. Styles to look wardrobes this year has been

(0171-734 7070). Black halterneck crépe dress, £55.99, from Walfis stores (0181-910 1333)

LEFT: Black, rib, floor-length cardigan, £260, by Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, London, W1 (0171-235 5470), and Cruise, Renfield Street, Glasgow (0141-248 2476). One-shoulder silver Lycra

dress, £45, Miss Selfridge, and stores nationwide (0181-910 1359). Black sequin-disc chiffon scart.

Black satin buckle sandals, £44.99, from Ravel stores nationwide (0171-631 0224)

date look that fares well over long sheath dresses or with evening trousers. used a black angora maxi cardigan from Joseph (£260); there

To add a little old-style the full-length cardigan (or Hollywood glamour, the ultiknitted coat, as some labels mate accessory is a generous describe them). It is an up-toquilted stole, shown above, in reversible satin and velvet, from Dickins & Jones (£80). Admittedly these can seldom be worn without looking dressy and, therefore, fail our multi-use criteria, but the cosyyet-sexy glamour that they provide is worth it.

The widest selections of stoles can be found at Liberry and other large department



THE Classic GIN.

demands

Gloag's

Gin in his

cocktail.



ABOVE: Blue velvet coat dress, £125, from Laura Ashley nationwide (01686 622116). Blue two-tone shell top, £27, from Dorothy Parkins nationwide (0171-291 2604). Blue two-tone trousers, £99, from Joseph (as above). Blue fake-fur collar, £59, by Jackson, from Ferwicks, Bond Street, W1 (0171-243 9900). Photographer: Richard Burns. Make-up: Sally Kvalhelm, Styling: Amandip Uppal

GROWING TIPS

■ Keep the plants out of direct sunlight but in a bright position, in rich, moist, fine compost and a

humid atmosphere and they will flower from March to November or December. Allow to dry out before watering and give a high potash feed throughout the

If the plants are likely to suffer

temperatures between IC and 10C, they should be kept as dry as

flowering should be dead-headed

M As the flowers open, the plants need a good, high potash feed. Mr Rose waters his with quarter-

Propagation is easy by leaf cuttings taken in early autumn. Choose a middle-aged leaf with

no flower stems. Cut a transverse section of a leaf, make a stit in the

compost mixture and push the

About six plantiets should

emerge in as many weeks. These will flower in nine months. Plant them into individual pots covered loosely with cloudy plastic bags

from greengrocers, and leave them on a windowsill without

Keep the pot relatively small to encourage flowering but make sure new leaves don't touch the

edge of the pot because they grow

strength tomato feed.

leaf about i bin down

any direct light.

Plants that have finished

and watered sparingly. They should not be fed until March when they should be repotted to flower in May.



STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

hundred every winter from my begonia tubers — and still they come. - J.L. Thorne, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

A The most effective chemicals against vine weevils are only available to commercial growers. A good biological control for amateurs is Nemasys H. available from Defenders, Occupation Road, Wye, Ashford. Kent TN25 5EN (01233 813121). Nemasys H is effective when the soil temperature is above I2C.

l have four daturas in pots. Last year they bloomed profusely, this year there are no flowers at all. I have fed them weekly with tomato food. What am I doing wrong? — C.M. Page. Westcliff on Sea, Essex.

Given a chance and space. A Given a criance and programmes brugmansias (as we now denurs) have to call the woody daturas) make a massive, greedy, fibrous root system. They should pro-duce white or golden trumpets through summer and autumn. After flowering, cut them back hard. They will then shoot away again and, as spring comes, they will need rich feeding to maximise early growth. Remember that all parts of the plant are

I have a beautiful passion I have a beautiful passion flower. Passiflora caerulea, which covers the walls of my patio. But every year it suffers from mould, which a friend says is due to lack of water. How do I treat this without spraying, and can I eat the fruit? — J. Whittaker, Brighton, East Sussex.

Aphids sometimes attack the shoots of passion flowers, causing mould on the lower leaves from excreted honeydew, so check that first. Plants with insufficient water and in very dry air sometimes die back at the tips, giving the impression of a fungal wilt. But if your plant is fruiting well it cannot be too short of water. Try watering more generously and hosing the plant over now and then, when

the sun is not directly on it. You can eat the fruit of blue passion flower, the only one that can be grown well outdoors, but they are insipid. There are more than 20 edible species, but only a

What specific controls do you recommend against vine weevils? I kill more than a fruit, including bright pink flowered Passiflora mollissima with banana-shaped fruit. Of those species suitable for a cold greenhouse in Britain, the following have good fruit: Passiflora actinia, P. edulis (the common granadilla). P. mixta, and P. mollissima. For more informa-

> Can we put grass clip-pings which contain sycamore seeds in our compost bin without producing hundreds of seedlings when we use the compost? — A.Sennett, Chislehurst. Kent.

tion look at John Vanderplank's

book Passion Flowers, recently

revised and reprinted by Cassell at E30 (ISBN 0 304 34216 5).

Yes. A good compost heap or bin is perfectly capable of cooking the life out of sycamore seeds. The risk, perhaps, is that there are always parts of a compost heap, at the edges, which do not cook properly, and these might contain viable seeds. This is why it is important to turn compost heaps at some stage to re-oxygenate the heap and to turn the dryer, cooler outsides into the centre.

■ A Cure for Moles: I. Morley of Wantage writes to tell a delightful tale of her vicar, who rid his garden of moles by putting the mechanism from a musical birthday card in a plastic bag buried in the ground. The moles have kept away ever

• Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, I Pennington Street, London El 9XN. We regret that it may not be possible to deal with every reduest. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that any



Jane Owen on how a single cutting inspired a Bristol man to raise glorious blooms on a budget

Love flowers in a cold climate



Chris Rose, who grows streptocarpus plants in his unheated flat, took three firsts this year at the Royal Horticultural Society Show

garden centre and it will probably come with a label announcing that the plant will not suffer temperatures below 10C. They have lovely flowers — funnel shaped with a bonnetlike frill and colours ranging from pink to blue — but, for those of us who use heating sparingly, IOC minimum is more than can be

promised to a plant. However streptocarpus, which originate from South Africa, are tougher than many plant labels suggest and Chris Rose, one of Britain's authorities on the plant, cultivates them in a flat without any central heating. Last winter, in his streptocarpus-filled lean-to, the temperature dipped to minus IC but all the plants survived

By "all" he is referring to several hundred - and that's just the leanto. In the rest of the flat the numbers top the thousand mark; trestle tables around the windows sag under the weight of plants; his computer is surrounded by 100 or so and, underneath the trestle

uy a streptocarpus from a out into a few well-shaded cold frames in the garden of his Bristol flat. This is obsessive (and highly successful) plantmanship on a budget - Mr Rose reckons his highest cost comes from the compost he has to buy in, about £100 a year at most.

Ten years ago a fellow student at Bristol University gave him a leaf fragment. Out of courtesy Mr Rose, who had his work cut out caring for his two large allotments and special collections of iris, helianthemum or rock rose, pelargoniums and hardy geraniums, coaxed the leaf cutting into a plant which stubbornly refused to flower. After a couple of years Mr Rose

resolved to throw it on the compost hean but, in that curious way that plants have when threatened with shears, spades or dark thoughts, it produced dark violet flowers with a yellow centre - it was probably a Constant Nymph'.

And with it flowered Mr Rose's magnificent passion which has overwhelmed his life ("I forgot to have a social life," he says) leaving only his job with the the Green Party untouched. His dedication has now received the recog flowering have a rest. More spill deserves: this August, at one of its

prestigious Westminster shows, the Royal Horticultural Society awarded Mr Rose three firsts for his streptocarpus plants, all his own hybrids grown in modest surroundings and shipped to London on an InterCity 125. None of the

award-winning plants was named. For Mr Rose, the pleasure comes from the plants rather than the glory of naming, although colleagues in the world of African

WEEKEND TIPS

Take root cuttings in a pot of plants such as phlox, acanthus, verbascum, and forms of Geranium sanguineum.

Protect house plants such as poinsettia from the two evils of overheated rooms and cold, draughty window ledges.

Top-dress fruit trees under glass with manure and bonemeal. If required, apply simazine on bare ground among strawberry plants and cane fruits, to stop weeds next year. Relieve shrubs bent under

the weight of snow before it

violets (cousins of streptocarpus) are trying to persuade him that while (DWEL) 105 gives him an accurate record of a plant with dusky red, white-throated flowers. it might be more user-friendly to give it a name.

(DWEL) 105 was a mere 51 weeks old -- that is 51 weeks from a seed -when it won a first for Mr Rose at the RHS show. His other two firsts were awarded to one with stunning magenta flowers, and the other with cloudy violet blue face with yellow centre.

What distinguishes Mr Rose's plants from those you might buy in supermarkets to put on a kitchen windowsill are the variety of flower colour and size, and the size of the leaves. While most commercially grown streptocarpus have at least one of their brittle primula-like leaves reaching about six inches, his plants tend to have their largest leaves reaching to about ten inches. But that is due mainly to the fact that he grows his in such low light levels (streptocarpus can't take direct light anyway) that the plants have to compensate by growing leaves. Streptocarpus

growing tips box, above) and so, although Mr. Rose will not sell his hybrids, his "bits of leaves" -which are available to any fellow enthusiast so long as he has the stock - might be worth a try.

The national collection of streptocarpus is held by Dibley's Nursery, Llanelidan, Ruthin, Wales LLI5 2LG (01978 790677) which has a good selection of plants for sale to the public. About 60 varieties are available on mail order and the nursery recommends choosing plants now to be sent out in March, at the beginning of the

to the address above. Those wanting to visit the nursery or the national collection should ring the number above.

Mr Rose emphasises that his telephone number or includ easy to grow from cuttings (see stamped addressed envelope.

ACROSS

1 Impressive occasion for Jumbo's last appearance (6)

4 Loth to suggest something of Scott's to read (3.5.2.10) 16 Pirate takes succession of ships with

call to scuttle one completely (4,4,3,6) 17 Ouickness that produces illusion of musement (9)

IS Artistic technique of a dab hand (7) 19 Granny, for example, is after the

best hairpiece (7)

20 Author who didn't have to abide Arnold's questioning (11)

21 Preparation for launch that finally comes to nothing (5-4)

22 Vegetable 1 swallowed with new

drink (8) 23 Prepared to work, dust off promis-

ing notes (Si 26 Mystery of killers training to go out East (6.23.6.7)

30 Firmly secure stand after front falls

off (5) 32 Data analyst is a big government

supporter G 34 Around midday, tucked in article

dropped from first issue by editor (7) 36 Prepare for job as union negotiator

37 Dreadful pain associated with a loss

for such as Housman's lad (9) 39 Game one follows with people is

disaster (9)

41 Wonderful person you may have at dinner soon 📆

42 Military leader has got an appalling

shape (7) 43 Deposit in jewel-bearing vein not

estrausted (9)

44 Incomplete feature arrived back in

skeletal form (9)

45 So long in a detached state (5) 46 Fell to cover point, irritatingly

caught (7) 48 Chinese craft turns horizontally to

ioliow missile (7)

50 Start of good weather for harvest (5) 51 Story of a teacher's most effective

period /5,5,2,4,4,6) 57 is left with one noun and two

pronouns (8)

58 Just starting to move slowly. Antarctic explorer abandoning Pole (S)

59 Acidhead showing acuity (9)

62 Strike in French terminal (4,2.5) 64 Current controller turned ruddy

odd, comparatively (7)

66 Surprised sound from Scot tucking into cheese roll (7)

67 Change positions of pieces in back rank (9)

68 Bear left here - it's the terminus

69 Infamous book-keeper (4.11,5) 70 Ring here for service (6)

1 A stupid chap is unable to commu-

nicate (7) 2 After which sovereign was replaced by half-crowns (8,10) 3 Preservative sailor put on unfin-

ished bird (9) 5 Encourage to try to catch up (7)

Outwitted in rebellion, and put on 7 Curious rationale for one who

transfers ownership (9) 8 Thoroughly strip and get to wash

9 Put into perspective warning over

10 Book-maker taking one's capital on a horse at the start (6)

II Elizabeth's favourite cheese (9) 12 Take carriage about a mile, or go by

foot (5) 13 One doesn't originally behave as a

sort of flatterer (8 14 Bull has no ring - removed from

nose repeatedly (8) 15 As one dreadfully crude and so on

22 I almost make a mistake in drugs before operation done for first time

Applying a name tag in error on bottom of sketch (II)

25 Ready reckoner for traveller abroad

26 Annie Oakley, perhaps — or La Pasionaria, say? (10)

27 East European region in which Slav ran a tiny resort (12) 28 Initially putting a knot here'd check if recollection needed (6,12)

29 The ternerity of the girl, introducing herself (10) 31 Hear prop got injured, put in body-

33 Sign of ominous development in

golf-club handle (4,3,2,3,5) 35 Had a chance to show off country cottage (5) 38 Does she make herself a name in the

40 lt's swell, having met nice US characters (9) 47 Inexperienced fielder, but he helps

the bowlers (5-6) 49 It may suit one fine, having a

regular day off (6.4) 52 There's precisely nothing in odd parts of Argentina - such as this (9)

53 Foolish acts, but initially stopping short of mad ones (9) 54 Copy most of answers

punishment for Jack (9) 55 Like some organs, or well-tempered claviers? (8)

56 A large number of handouts distrib-

59 After Christmas spirits, he decided to stop being tight (7)

60 Bird trapped by cunning, without mercy (7) 61 About to check, having received a

warning (6) 63 Turn over gun, one Colt - that's an

order (5) 65 Quietty concealed order unleashing hound (5)

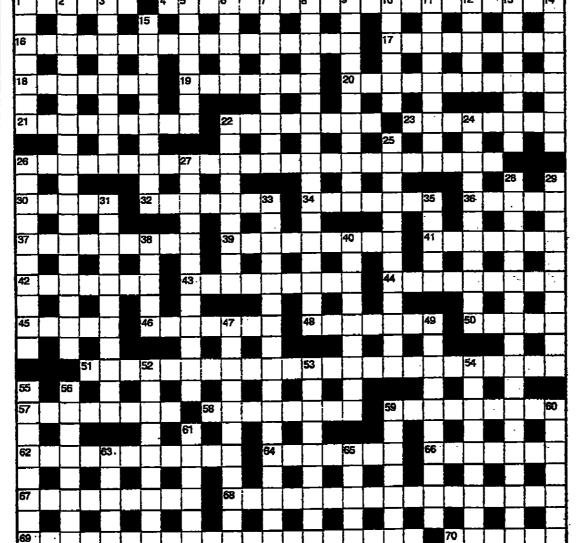
CHRISTMAS JUMBO CROSSWORD



Win a methuselah of Moët & Chandon champagne and £100 in our festive quiz. Five runnersup will receive £100. Entries, by January 6, to: Christmas Jumbo



Crossword, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London El 9XN. Solution on January 11



NAME **ADDRESS**

Times Two Christmas Holiday Crossword

There are no prizes for this crossword. The answers will be published on Monday, December 23

4 Concealing (8,2,4,6) 16 Between ruling ministries

1 Beer/lemonade drink (6)

17 History in date order (9) 18 Constructed anew (7)

19 Crop storehouse (7) 20 Of poor quality (3.2.2.4)

ACROSS

21 Malefactor (9)

22 Mountaineers (8) 23 Heavy club (8)

26 Prove people's

(4,3,3,3,4.3,4) 30 Custard apple (5)

32 Making ground plan (7)

34 Confident; definite (7) 36 Revive: mass meeting (5)

37 One leaving for new life (9)

39 Country Wear (5.4) 41 Railed town vehicle (7)

42 Instructor (7) 43 Clumsy incompetence (9)

44 (To the) ultimate level (3,6) 45 Fruit; water variety (5)

46 Demand too much of (7) 48 An enactment (7)

50 Egypt peninsula (5) 51 Small, proper beginnings

(5,2.3,5,9) 57 Eastern (8)

58 Wearing fingerless gloves

59 Metal for recycling (5.4)

62 Oblong (11) 64 Foot lever (7)

66 Fungus disease (7)

67 Most hot, arid (weather) (9) 68 Royal birthday parade (8,3,6)

69 Eg gong, drum pizno (10,10) 70 Regard highly (6)

DOWN

I (US) down-and-out area

(4.3)2 Self-descriptively (written)

3 Swashbuckling courage (7-

5 Repayer for injury (7)

6 It. port; a cake (5) 7 Repetition (of action) (9)

8 "Gov"t . . . by the people, for

the people" speech (10,7)

9 Reversible words (11) 10 Subtle distinction (6)

11 Titiliating joint (5.4) 12 Slowly (mus.) (5)

13 Barred; kept out (8) 14 Largest land animal (8)

15 Cause-of-death exam (4-6)

22 Steering group (9) 24 Wool-gatherers (11)

25 Of acerbic speech (5-7) 26 When light meal is ready

27 Muscle spasm; child's overactivity (12)

28 (Scientists') magnifier (8,10) 29 Etruscan (10)

31 Keep girl off stage, Mrs -(Coward) (11)

33 Pip its hero (Dickens) (5,12) 35 Channel: abandon (5)

38 Human trunk (5) 40 (Escaping) without harm

47 Mixed-fruit ice cream (5-6) 49 Old hearing aid (3.7)

52 Theatre patrons (9) 53 Pub landlord (9)

54 Roomy (9) 55 Thick bread stice (8)

56 More honest (S) 59 Add sugar (to) (7)

60 Patent remedy (7) 61 Very drunk (slang) (6)

63 Farewell (5)

65 Jeans fabric (5)

Alacobean mansi

pical porics

growing season. Dibley's catalogue is free — send an A4 stamped addressed envelope

collection is likely to appeal to streptocarpus enthusiasts rather than those who enjoy looking at gardens. Those who would like to visit the collection should write to Mr Rose at 26 Devonshire Road. Bristol BS6 7NJ. Please add your

Plants that bring back tropical memories

Stephen Anderton explains how to translate those exotic plants seen on holiday into your own garden

ust back from Madeira and the Canaries, my mind is full of how to translate to Britain those tropical effects and fabulous vegetation to make my own Quinta do Saffron Walden.

Without the hot sunshine, achieving those wild, hot colours is not easy. But it can be done. If you want to bring home the tropical style, it has to be done with a different

range of plants.

Madeira has one of those all-things-to-all-plants dimates which allows ordinary oak trees and camellias to grow alongside exotic protea from South Africa and sizeable trees of the angel's trumpet, Brugmansia suaveolens, dripping with enough trumpets to start a brass band. But in hotter, drier Tenerife, you see at once that even grass, let alone a lawn, is a great and

rare extravagance.
Colourful exotics are easy, but a lawn needs attention and especially water. In some places coarse Bermuda grass, Cynodon dactylon, is substitoted for our range of finer lawn grasses, but even that must be watered.

garden, getting rid of the lawn begins at once to remove that reminder of dampness and constant rains. What replaces it is a matter of personal preference. Paving is efficient but still very British. Gravel is an option, or, better still, the powdery crushed stone seen under trees in town squares on the Continent, Bare, cultivated earth looks right, too. Never mind that Commandment of English Gardening saying no square inch should be left unplanted, this is tropical gardening we are trying to imitate here, and in those climates there is plenty of bare This is the place where hotclimate gardeners build little circular ramparts of stones or soil 5-6in high, into which a puddle of water can be delivered from a hose pipe. Then the precious ichor sinks down to the plant's roots, and is not

subverted by grass. the island gardens I saw in late autumn was the strongly coloured climbers which we cannot grow here. Bougain-villeas, scarlet passion flowers and endless members of the bignonia family, including pink pandorea, and orange ful. What helps most is an warmed up, so they do not Cape honeysuckle (Tecomaria early start to summer warmth, suffer a check. Better to be

And the second

capensis) and the "Fire" vine Pyrostegia venusta. The only one we can get away with here is the orange trumpet vine Campsis radicans.

But if we cannot have the wildest climbers, at least we can grow any number of colourful herbaceous exotics, and plants with extravagant foliage. There would be canmas, dahlias, verbenas, salvias, zinnias and tithonia for colour, and, for foliage, greygreen melianthus, the almost hardy banana Musa basjoo, the cut-leaved rhus, variegated cannas, and spotted leopard plant Farfugium japonicum 'Aureomaculatum'.

The great reed of the tropical islands, Arundo donax, would be included for its skyline tall stems and drooping windwoven leaves. For spiky fo-liage and palm-substitutes, there would be cordylines, yuccas and phormium.

here are so many tender things, including houseplants, which can be bedded out for the summer if you want awn grasses, but even that to give the impression of nust be watered.

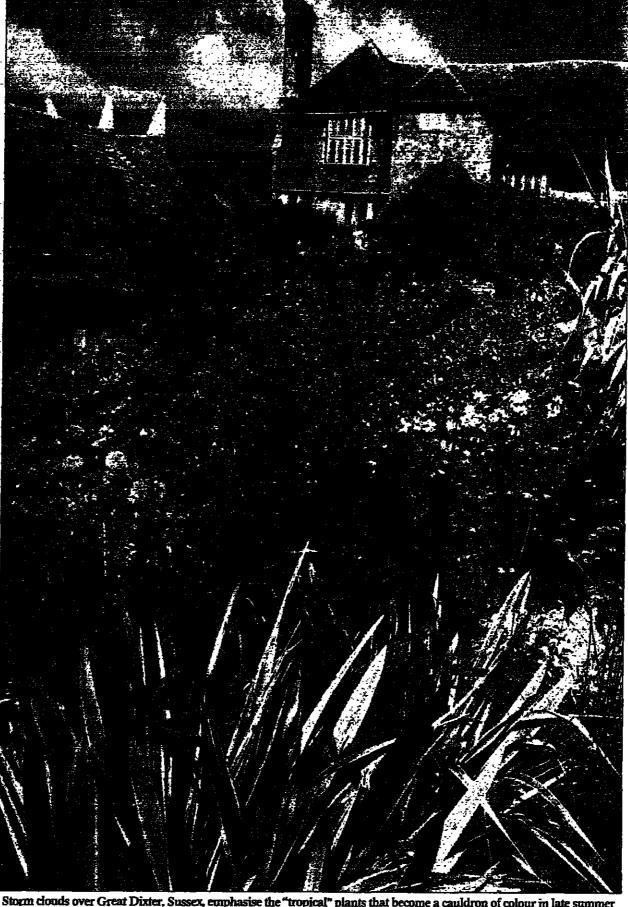
In a pseudo-tropical British can sit out in their pots. The Swiss cheese plant, Monstera deliciosa, can be plunged in the soil still in its pot for the summer, although it will not produce the cuckoo-pint flowers and green, phallic, pineapple-and-banana flavoured fruits here.

With shelter, even large leaved begonias such as 'Lucerna', rex and scharffii can be planted out for the summer. And with a little serious taking of cuttings the autumn before you could have a whole bed of these exotics to plant out.

... And if we cannot have the naturalised banks of succulents such as prickly pear and out smaller numbers of them, overwintered in a greenhouse.

Care must be taken when planting out evergreen houseplants that the transition from house to garden is gradual. Indoor gloom even to British summer outdoors can scorch ubverted by grass. the leaves. They need gradual The striking feature of all hardening off, like bedding plants, to adjust to the sun and the wind. The transition from

a greenhouse is less fierce. Curiously, to create the tropical effect, what we most need is not a drought summer. though plenty of sun is help-ful. What helps most is an



Storm clouds over Great Dixter, Sussex, emphasise the "tropical" plants that become a cauldron of colour in late summer

potted on under glass than

Once the plants are out,

watering, when it happens, is

generous and thorough; wa-

school is frowned on. In the

well-enriched soil, plants grow

hard and fast, so that by

August, when the garden is

coming up to its peak, foliage

Paulownia stems stooled

last winter are fat rods 12ft

high with leaves the size of

dinner plates. You can walk

And all in dear old Britain.

is as generous as flower.

under the banana leaves.

Stephen Anderton was a

guest lecturer on The Times Gardening Cruise to Madeira

and the Canaries last month.

This week he won a Garden

Writers Guild award in the

consumer press category.

i the little-and-offer

checked by cold.



Canna, verbena and dahlia can all give that "tropical" effect

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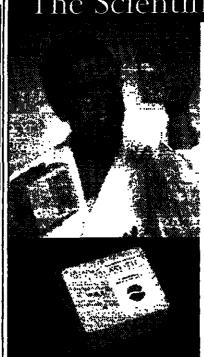
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so that our season is length-

ened and these tender plants have more days in which to

grow, establish and strut their

stuff. To that end, good, rich

eat denent

At Great Dixter in Sussex.

Christopher Lloyd has made a

tropical garden in an old rose

garden, surrounded by tall

vew hedges, which becomes a

cauldron of colour in late

summer. To walk into it, even

in autumn, is like drowning in

Fergus Garrett, the head

gardener at Great Dixter. likes

to start plants for bedding out

- such as Nicotiana sylvestris

and the castor oil plant — as

early as he can, to gain time.

But he never plants them out

until the weather has properly

fruit salad.

📕 Hall Place, Bezicy, London (0181-303 7777).

At junction of A2 and A223. Open Mon-Fri 7.30am-dusk, weekends and Bank Hols 9am-dusk. Free.

Many of the parks in the boroughs of Greater London are a public mystery whereas they deserve to be much better known and visited like the great country house gardens in rural counties. Many survive from the grand private houses built when London was the hub of political and social life, and Jacobean Hall Place is a prime example.

This outstanding mansion is in immaculately maintained gardens whose extent belies their urban surroundings. At this time of year the elegant proportions of the garden are best appreciated; spacious lawns and fine trees leading to walks

along the River Cray.
Outstanding topiary provides winter shape, while the yew hedge and ancient brick wall that back two sides of a double herbaceous border also help preserve the

garden's framework.

For anyone in the area looking for a walk in an historic setting, Hall Place offers a lesser-known alternative to London's renowned historic parks such as Osterley, Chiswick and Syon.

Roundhay Park (Tropical World Canal Gardens), Roundhay Road, Leeds (0113-266 1850).

Take A58 Roundhay Road from city ... centre; off A6120 northern ring road. Open daily (except Dec 25), 10am-dusk. Free

As far removed from an intimate, private garden as you could imagine, Roundhay Park is the ideal place to visit during the winter holiday period when it is a kaleidoscope of eye-opening surprises for children and horticultural rarities for the

The park has belonged to Leeds city council (whose reputation for maintaining and managing the historic houses and gardens in their area is second to none) since 1871, before which the site was an enormous kitchen and flower garden belonging to the wealthy Nicholson

OPEN THIS WEEKEND



The Temple of Apollo at Stourhead

family. The two great features today are the ornamental canal gardens and the tropical greenhouses (whose collection is

only bettered by Kew).

Roundhay offers the bonus of fauna to complement the flora: there are monkeys, butterflies, birds and other creatures suited to the habitat. And there is also plenty of parkland for walking and enjoying the English winter before mov-ing beneath the glass for something altogether more exotic.

Stourhead, Stourton, Wiltshire (01747 840348).

Off A303 at Mere, three miles north via B3092 to Stourton. Open daily all year 9am-dusk. £3, children £1.50.

It is admirable that the National Trust not only keeps the jewel of its 18th-century landscape gardens open all year but offers a reduced entrance fee during the winter months. As I have written during the past weeks about other landscape gardens (Studley Royal and Rievaulx Terrace for instance) there is a certain

magic about these places in winter with which no amount of summer colour and foliage can compete.

The quality of light that enhances the views across Stourhead's beautiful lake, picking up on the dome of the Pantheon at one end or the bridge and Bristol Cross at the other makes one appreciate the vision of the 18th-century garden-makers such as Henry Hoare, creator of Stourhead

I cannot think of a better antidote to the excesses of Christmas Day than a brisk circuit of the Stourhead lake, taking in the various detours to the grotto, the Temple of Apollo perched among the trees above one side of the lake, and the paths that lead off among the trees.

And of course, if you are purist like

myself, you will see Henry Hoare's 18thcentury landscape and the trees added between 1790 and 1840 by his greatnephew, Richard Colt Hoare, without the blazing colour of the rhododendrons added at the end of the 19th century, which attracts thousands of visitors in late spring and early summer.

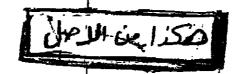
Morrab Subtropical Garden, Penzance, Cornwall (01736 62341, ext 3322)

Signposted from Penzance. Open all year dawn to dusk. Free.

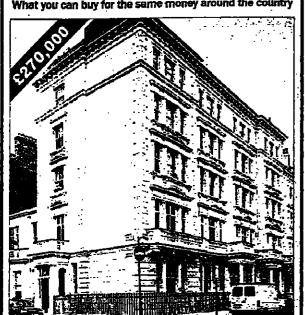
Britain's climate hardly allows for broadleafed evergreens from tropical or warm temperate places, but southern Cornwall is one of the few places they survive. There is no better contrast to the cold, bare branches that dominate most gardens at this time of year than Morrab, which

deserves its subtropical name. The garden was created during the 19th century by Reginald Upcher, who took full advantage of exotic species of trees and shrubs then being introduced to Britain. Rarities such as the New Zealand cabbage palm tree combine well with the winter-flowering sasanqua camellias and wonderfully period architectural flourishes, such as the bandstand and ornate fountain, to preserve the rich Victorian

GEORGE PLUMPTRE



HOMESWAP



se on this three-bedroom flat with a roof terrace, on the floors of a corner Victorian house overlooking Warwick Square, half a mile from Victoria Station, costs £270,000, including a share of the freehold. intial, 0171-834 9998)



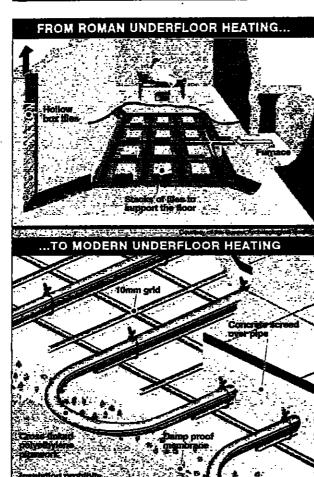
For the same sum this architect-designed six-bedroom family house on the banks of Loch Lomond, near Arrochar, Scotland



For a little more-£295,000-you could buy this secluded five-bedroom 19th century house in seven acres of formal gardens and woodland, at Coddenham, Suffolk. Oakwood House comes with double garage, thatched cold house, timber-framed barn, summerhouse and tennis court.

Perfect for a night on the tiles

The Romans had the answer to heating today's open-plan and loft-style homes. Emma Mahony on the value of underfloor heating



nderfloor heating (UFH) is enjoying biggest revival in Britain since times. Although it accounts for a minute fraction of the total heating market, loft apartments and self-build developments are demanding better heating for rooms with

One of the main reasons for the popularity of UFH is that it is cheap to install. While UFH has always been a favourite at the top of the end of the property market, lower prices are bringing it in line with radiators. You can now install a system from as little as £12 to £35 per sq metre. Prices vary

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according to location and size of the floor area: the greater the area, the cheaper it

Ian Mills of Wirsbo, one of

the biggest underfloor heating suppliers in the world. attributes the interest to homeowners who buy a plot of land and design their own houses. 'Although the capital cost is higher, UFH will last the life of the house and, unlike radiators, does not need renewing every 12 to 15 years," he says. "Once installed in a well-insulated building, the running costs will be considerably lower - particularly for rooms with high ceilings." The cheaper running costs are



Madeleine Sanderson enjoys the warm stone floor of her apartment in west London, which has underfloor heating

because of the principle of radiant heat, which requires a lower air temperature because warmth is spread evenly across the room. Radiators give off convection heat, heating the higher strata of the air in the room first instead of warming from the feet upwards.

Some architects are particularly keen on the out-of-sight aspect of UFH, because it fits in with their minimalist designs. "Radiators can dictate how you finish a room. They are unnecessarily dominant across a space," says Ian Hogarth, of Littman Goddard Hogarth. "We often recom-mend underfloor heating to clients, especially in loft-style apartments where it helps

with open planning." Madeleine Sanderson, film producer who lives in a loft-style apartment in west London, inherited her underfloor heating from the previous owner, an architect. "I'd never have thought of install-ing it myself," she says. "But it does seem to stop the stone floors being so chilly, especial-

ly when so much of the heat of the flat goes out through the big windows. My favourite bit is coming down the stairs in the morning and stepping on

omfort is the main reason why people choose underfloor heating. When Mark and Alex Hoyle restored the kitchen of Loddendon Manor at Staplehurst, Kent, they considered installing heaters in the bottom of the kitchen units. "But the heat would have been

With an old timber-joisted ceiling nearly 25ft high and a floor space of 28 sq ft, radia-tors would have been ugly and ruined the period look, particularly when wall-mounted. "Underfloor heating was the best option, especially as the room was north facing," Mrs

As part of a six-week refurbishment, including underlaying a concrete floor before installing the heating, the system they put in cost about £3,000. "Our main cost was not the heating but the tiles;

we invested in an Umbria terracotta-style stone which cost £6,000 in total," Mrs Hoyle says. "But it is worth it

and the dogs love it."

Modern UFH systems are particularly suitable for ground floors, because they can be used with stone, marble, granite, ceramic tiles and timber. In the 1960s and 1970s, the systems were run on electricity and were expensive. Now they are based on hot water pushed through crosspolyethylene plastic pipes, which are sandwiched pipes are laid in a snake or snail fashion and can be

One of the main downsides to UFH installation is that it means a lot of upheaval, making it much more suitable for putting into new homes or where major refurbishment is

linked to radiators upstairs.

Most systems can be installed with a normal heating boiler and are more energyefficient, because the system works at a lower temperature. To make radiators work they have to be about 80C to 85C.

When you consider that water in a hot tap is 55C, you can see that there is a lot of pressure on a boiler," says Rex Ingram, of the UFH Manufacturers' Association. "Water in the pipes for UFH need only be about 43C, no hotter than the

he flat break

Monte

palm of your hand." While Britain may have a long way to go until it reaches Germany's eco-mindedness. where 80 per cent of new houses have UFH, it has still come a long way since that Roman underfloor heating. In those days, the systems were building carrying hot gases through a flue into a central expansion chamber in the room. Temperature control was so hard to regulate that. as the floor got hotter, the

Romans resorted to wearing wooden-soled sandals. quite so dog-friendly. UFH Manufacturers* Association, 0181-941 7080.

■ Recommended companies: Wirsbo, 01293 548512; IPEC, 0171-David Robbins, 01424 830140: Envirofloor, 0115-960 3659.

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Paul Richardson offers some advice on preparing for a seasonal visitor

A clean sweep Santa

s you hang the stockings around the fireplace on Christmas Eve, old gent who will shortly be arriving to fill them. In a recent survey, nine out of ten Santas said they had developed coughs as a result of inhaling soot. It was had enough sending little boys up chimneys. but sending OAPs down them seems like a very cruel form of exploitation.

But there is something we can do. We can have our chimneys regularly cleaned. which at least eases the pressure on Santa's lungs and cuts down on his laundry bills. A dirty chimney does no favours for the rest of us either. Recent incidents of carbon monoxide poisoning from a blocked or partially blocked flue, and the increasing frequency of chimney fires (Britain has one of the highest rates in Europe), suggest that we are insufficiently acquainted with our local chimney sweeps - or "chimney technicians" as they are now called. Depending on the kind of fuel burned in the fireplace, a chimney should be cleaned either once every three months twood fires and stoves), once a year (oil, gas, smokeless coal) or twice a year (bituminous coal).

According to Martin Glynn of the National Association of Chimney Sweeps, whose 215-strong membership accounts for most of the sweeps operating in the UK, the main cause of chirnney problems is the build up of tar and dust on the walls of the flue, which can only be removed by the action of brushing. (There are a lot of



Martin Glynn sweeps another chimney clean before the big day arrives

cowboys who go around convincing housewives that a vacuum cleaner alone will do the trick, which is just not true," Mr Glynn says.) Sooty build-up is exacerbated by burning wet or green wood, which releases dangerous amounts of creosote and tar into the chimney.

If your fire won't light or smokes out your living room, the cause may be a badly-fitted chimney pot or cowl — the technical term for a device that prevents birds and other objects, alive or dead,

from falling in. Again, the chimney sweep can help, diagnosing the problem and replacing the offending piece of roof furniture. "Good sweeps will be looking up to see what's on top of the flue before their van wheels have stopped," Mr Glynn says.

Calling in a sweep is a far less bothersome business than you might imagine. The chimney technician at work is also a fascinating sight to see. The sweeping process normally takes between 30 and 45 minutes. Modern sweeps use plenty of dust-sheets and a vacuum, which is just as well, because a chimney which has not been cleaned for three or

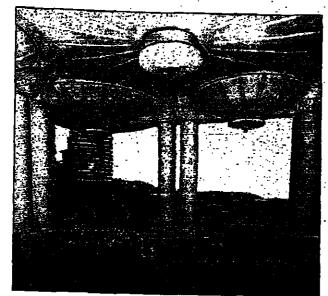
four years may produce a sackful of soot.

The NACS is keen to rid the profession of its Mary Poppins image, but sweeping also has its entertaining side. In some quarters a sweep is still thought to bring good luck, and many of the association's members offer a wedding call-out service. Tradition dies hard, despite all the talk of safety and efficiency. In a well-worn custom, when the sweeping's done and the blackened brush emerges from the rooftops, leaving a chimney you could eat your mince-pies off, the customer is always invited outside to take a look. The children love it." Mr Glynn says. (And so will Santa Claus.)

● The National Association of Chimney Sweeps, freephone 0800 833464.

• Martin Glynn of B.G. Wright Sweeps can be contacted on 0181-302 5468.

Christine Wheeler views a sumptuous apartment that would make an ideal Christmas gift for a multimillionaire



An expansive, expensive view from the Monte Carlo flat

The flat to break the bank in Monte

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Eighth floor apartment, Le Florestan, Boulevard D'Italie, Monaco • Price: 4.5m • Setting: This is an address to impress. Nice airport 20 mins by car, or 9 mins by helicopters. Yachts can be moored just opposite. • Shopping: Your guess first please ● Entertainment: Lacoste for the tiny Italian cafés or haute couture for snooty French establishments. Drive the Monaco Grand Prix circuit every day

f your beloved has everything, including a fleet of extravaganza has its own. oil tankers, how do you show you care at Christmas? Well, you could test your mega-rich paramour's lack of materialism and sense of humour by offering only a badly wrapped lava lamp. But to avoid a festive season in painful traction, why not jingle the keys to a £4.6 million apartment taking up the eighth floor of a modern pink Carlo, where such outrageous prices barely raise a perfectly plucked evebrow.

In Monaco, £4.6 million is middle market. Nothing-special two-bedroom flats start at £1 million and one penthouse, admittedly with the acreage of a small parish and a rooftop swimming pool bigger than your local lido, is on sale for £15 million.

This is the Hello! world of private iets and double-parked Ferraris, where public transport to Nice airport is by helicopter; where you can wear designer labels with pride and give your sable a guilt-free airing in readiness for Gstaad. The principality is 500 acres

of mainly apartment blocks, with little room for private gardens, hence your personal balcony count is a symbol of status and depth of wallet. You will not be surprised to

huge pillared terrace with ornately carved ceilings reminiscent of lavish Moorish tents, high-society rustic furniture and giant terracotta pots. Inside, all pots are Chinese porcelain, as belits an interior with the opulence of an ambassadorial residence, with marble, silk, walnut and lemon wood. Happily the ormolu has been kept to a minimum. length of the flat would not

disgrace Kensington Palace. Leafing through the bro-chure I had some misgivings about what I thought looked like flock wallpaper. Silly me. That £4.6 million guarantees reception rooms lined with the palest blue silk damask, an understated backdrop for the intricate Persian rugs and delicately inlaid furniture

In the main bedroom (one of four, all en suite with walk-in closets the size of a studio flat) ecru, cream and gold handpainted silk matches the canopied bed and complements the two chocolate brown velvet sofas. One small child with a chocolate eclair could cause profound paranoia in this property. I suspect that covering the walls with high denomination dollar bills would have been cheaper. Do silk walls need vacuuming? Who learn that every room, except cares; disposing of dust would,

Like most who move in Monegasque circles, where more time is spent in the bath than at the stove, I did not linger in the kitchen: clinical white and chrome, every appliance known to man (or, in this town, Filpina maid) and a tiled floor you could operate on. A shiny showroom where, God forbid, a grubby teatowel or rogue spot of caviare should sully its silent perfection.

interior. Not to your taste? No worries; fly in one of your many friends who dabble in design to sip Pernod on the Avenue Princesse Grace and plan the remodelling.

What you are after is the 640 square metres in a tiny principality where space is at a premium. Unusually for Monte Carlo, where they make their money work, the wood-panelled reception area (which cannot be bought or sold) is cavernous, with one perfectly placed black leather sofa. No dried flower arrangements here. Even the material draped in the lifts to protect the walls as furniture was moved looked smarter than my drawing room curtains.

This flat's one drawback is location: only A-minus. In the property hierarchy one really ought to overlook either the harbour or Casino square, or have panoramic views of the

of course, be delegated to staff. Med. Draping myself eleganttom-built Jeens that occasionally rough it along a chateau's strade in winter sunshine gravel drive are cavalierly

strong enough to wear Raybans without looking a complete poser, the scene looked pretty acceptable to me paragliders catching therms; the brilliant blue beyond the rows of palms and the Sporting Club; Karl Lagerfeld's hilltop pile across flick of a white-gloved hand the bay. The only eyesore is the 1960s apartment block across avoic any

where near the heliport where metal dragonflies bustle about with such noisy regularity it reminded one American uncomfortably of Vietnam. o why not join Karl on the French coast where ladles of dosh will land you a very

acceptable villa, large garden and a decent beach - none of which are available in Monte Carlo? Are you kidding? Six months a year residence equals zero income tax and death duties, to name but two reasons. And, since the influx of the tennis and Formula 1 boys, Monaco is shedding her dowager image of a once glittering watering hole living

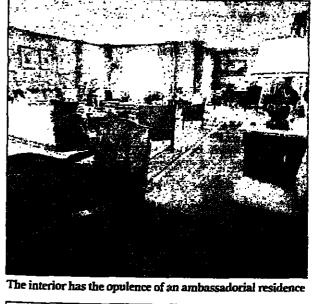
off its faded reputation.

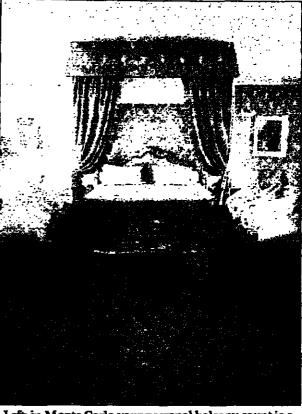
I was also told that Monaco is relatively free of street crime, so no worries about having your Rolex stolen. Here, Lamborghinis and cus-

parked on the litter-free streets without fear of theft or vandalism - probably not unconnected with the number of police patrolling or controlling the traffic with a very French

syringes in a squat. They are cat-walk immaculate and appear to have done nothing more dangerous than ask an off-duty speeding Schumacher who he thought he was, Damon Hill? But try cruising around in a beat-up Skoda

that has never picked up





Left: in Monte Carlo your personal balcony count is a symbol of high status and depth of wallet. Above: the main bedroom with luxurious canopied bed

suspect it's "State your business and open the boot".

LONDON RENTALS

atr

PIED A TERRE

Lux 4th & 1 bd fam fig with

sucure electronic gp., o italicit Thimses, Next to Time Galler out'n (Bankside Power Stn), directly opposite St Paul's achedral, Suitable as accomm for ag bany autor requiring c. London wiedly apt. £1000pcm

0171 351 7276.

WOODSIDE PARK

N12

Townhouse: 4 badrooms, 1.5 badrooms, study, fully fitted lideries, dining reception, lasty familiaries. 3 minotes from tube large garden, parking, CH. 4350 per week. Available

0181 441 1581.

W7, 4 Ige 4 bed flats, close Gionnesser Ed Tube, 3rd : with Hft, Awaii now, £700; Winkworths 0171 370 6762

GIBRALTAR

There is a village mentality: screaming round the Grand Prix hairpin near the Hotel de Paris, our driver yelled Bonjour at Phillipe and Alex. exchanged greetings with more than one Porsche, noted Stephanie's 4x4 outside her

restaurant. But with the Italian border 20 minutes to the left and the Côte d'Azur on the right, you can opt out into a private world. Vivre heureux. vivre cache (live happily, live hidden) is much quoted you have the money.

● Agent: Patrick Dring of Knight Frank (0171-629 8171).

SOUTH KEN SW7 Close park a tube 2 doeble bed 2 bath furn flat, large recep £365 pw Azon & Lewis Property Services 0171 244 9911; 0171 244 9838!

ST JOHNS WOOD Elegent mews. hse, i/f, 2 bed, 2 bath, recep. Lux fir kit, 93e, 9ch. Very quiet. £295 pm. Tel:0181 953 8911 T

SW7, 2 double bed flat in quiet mays good cond, close to Gloucester Rd rubs. £350pw Winkworths 0171 370 6767.

SW7, interior designed lwr grd 3 bed flat close Gloucester Ed tube. Available new. £500pw Winkworths 0171 370 6767.

COUNTRY RENTALS

WINCHESTER

AREA (6 miles East)

Rural fareshouse in good cond, 5 beds, 2 baths, 3 loos, CPI, fed list, Ags, open first, 3 reception reams utility, walled garden. Option on stabiling & paddock. £175@pcm.

01962 771757.

cenv, in platious surroundings 4 beds, 2 receps, garage + gar-den. To let £1000 p.c.m. Tel Lane Fox 01734 845757.

NORTH OF THE

CAMDEN BYA'I Lyone St. Protty, stucco fronted gabled semi-dustr contral need 2/3 res, killing, 2/3 beds, bath, red, cloak, smell gen, 228,000 Sciekley & Kent 0171 267 2053 UTTLE VEHICE/shids Vals. The specialist local agents. Vichers 5 Co 0171 289 1692

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

BRACKEN **AYENUE, SW12** raccionily premuted 3 bod hour Mighringale Triangle arus, Dible cep, kie, 2 dhie beds, 1 stagle ige bath, 27tz garden approx. C197,500 fresbold. Halifax Property Service 0181 675 6464

CITY & WEST END

WC1 1 bed garden flat 1930; bile economy 7 heating 662,500 hymbury & Ball 0177 833 4466 DULWICH

MUSEUM facing garden, gas fixed aga, ful gas CH, double garage & off

£170,000 for quick sale. Tel 018 2915284 or 0181 8984459.

THOUGHT Of runidential property as an investment." Buy a second property to inits out with yields of up to 26% on capital used, Pull A - 2 service realistic. Call now for more infestmention 0171 286 0450

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4500 000

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articulum and to arrange a visit. SURREY

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mins Guildford. 5 beds, 4 rec, 2 show rms, bath, clks, kex ket/brk rm, uril, Gas CH. Dible ggs. Turied Va acre gdn. Nearin conspletion. £285,000 Heward & Daykin 01428 606020

WALES

to that in a handerone stone tower. Character & unfirmmentity combined with superbinsulation it ligh speed byterpet links. Beentiful location just 200 years from the village centre. Visit the show home it see where the best of the past meets the future. Bourse from ESS,000 hvorkspaces evallable to must in convexed faces building from ESS per 0800 278848

TAYLOR WOODNOW Menore: Phase III 2 k 3 had spurtnennis golf course location, heated wrimming pool, from 647,000 3 day inspection visits swell For Brockson 0181 893 2525

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COUNTRY

PROPERTY

BALEARICS

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KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

0171 589 4836

Looking for quick sale. Tab 8973 295043 (day) or 01242 250663 (eves). THE two-bedroom flat at

W6-Em Church St. 1 had bright and spacious 3rd door fast with lift LM f119,500 Auron & Lewis 0171 244 9911: 0171 244 98381

MORTGAGES

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Overlooking Free Shifts.
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ensule, bunge, thing m,
kitchen, bethroom, Ct., celler,
Residential arree, with 2108,000. Tel: 01628 781710.

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ementera, 75,000sqm. divid into 5 plots of 15,000sqm. £600,000 entire site. Tel:0634 713 1 7144/ Fax:0034 713 1 5192.

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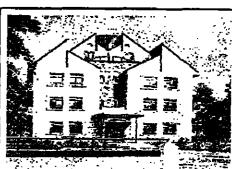
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DOUBLE **GLAZING**

Tor home owners wanting to keep heat in and noise out, the good news is that double glazing has advanced a lot over the years. So much so that the Prince of Wales has converted to the

cause. All the traditional-style houses being built at Poundbury, Dorset, with which the Prince is associated, have double glazing which uses heatreflective glass and softwood rather than plastic or coloured hardwood frames. The range of styles now available means that a double-glazing company should be able to match

your existing windows. Recent additions, for example, include sash windows that not only look the part but slide vertically

and tilt inwards for easier cleaning.

Questions of taste aside, double glazing is more than an optional decorative extra. Many estate agents say that more and more E househunters expect double glazing to be a standard fitting, even in older houses, where it might be fitted in bathrooms, for example.

As most units are custom-built, double glazing is not cheap. Some companies specify a minimum order of about £700, which would probably buy you a new 4ft by 3ft sash window or two plain windows of the same size. The more you have done the cheaper it works out as discounts come into play. But, while it may be a valuable selling point, do not necessarily expect to recoup your money. According to a NatWest survey, 69 per cent of professional valuers said double glazing added less value than it cost.



Prince of Wales, a convert to double glazing, at Poundbury

For listed houses, and some houses in conservation areas, replacement double-glazed windows cannot be used, but a second window that matches the original and fits closely behind

it can be installed. The motivation for swapping single-paned for double thickness windows is diverse. For some, adding fancy new windows is a socially competitive sport, but most people put in double glazing to keep warm and cut fuel bills — heat loss from a double-glazed window is about half

that from a single-paned one. Security is another important factor, because double-glazed windows and doors now come with built-in locks and bolts. A double thickness of glass also goes a long way to making your house quieter, so you are less aware of passing lorries or next door's barking dog.

CLARE STEWART

C.

PROPERTY NEWS

ONE OF Britain's leading historic houses, Otley Hall in Suffolk, is for sale through Strutt & Parker (01473 214841). The Grade I listed medieval house is moated and the site is mentioned in the Domesday book. The 11-bedroom house includes a Great Hall galler ied kitchen, 16th-century carving, moulded beams and arched doorways. Price,

£750,000-plus. ■ ALMOST 30 per cent of house sales are to first-time buyers, the National Association of Estate Agents reports. The need for more space is the reason 31 per cent of potential buyers give for moving, 27 per cent moved to be nearer to

their work. A THIRD of homes worth £1-£2 million in London areas such as Kensington and Chelsea are being bought by thirtysomethings. The reason, Knight Frank says, is City of London bonuses and increased salaries.

DOUGLAS & Gordon, of Fulham, west London, has registered a new house hunter every eight minutes since June, says Ivor Dickinson, managing director, who has had to double his staff.

17 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh, part of the former home of Sir Robert Lorimer and William Henry Playfield, two of Scotland's most famous architects, is for sale by Rettie and Co (0131-220 4160) at £119,500-plus.

Amanda Loose

As you prepare for the midwinter madness that grips the stores, here is our guide to what's on offer ...

Where early birds get the best bargains

LONDON STORES

throughout the store.

□ Debenhams 334-348 Oxford Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-408 4111). From Dec 27; Dec 26 in Up to 50 per cent off items

☐ Fenwick New Bond Street, W1 (0171-629 9/6/) and branches nationwide. From Dec 27 for three weeks.

Newcastle from Dec 28. Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store. Womenswear: Nicole Farhi velvet icans from £129 to £59: John Smedley ribbed cardigans from £75 to £39; Ben de Lisi black ribbed wool-mix jackets from £419 to £209; Admyra blonde wool/cashmere long coats from E189 to E79.

☐ Harrods 87 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, SWI (0171-730

1234). From Jan 8-Feb 1. Up to 55 per cent off items throughout the store with an extra 10 per cent off for Harrods account customers' purchases made on Jan 11. Customers spending £200 or more in a single transaction during the first four days of the sale can enter a draw to win a Volkswagen Passat. Sale items include 40 per cent off selected silver-plated Holloware. eg. punch set was £259, sale price £149; 40-50 per cent off selected Atlantis crystal; Admiral 22SL American-style fridge/freezer was £1,899, sale price £1,299; 50 per cent off Harrods luggage carts; 33 per cent off assorted throws: 33 per cent off hand-embroidered Windsor bed linen, eg, queen-size lace bedspread reduced from £125 to £85; up to 75 per cent off selected John Galliano womenswear: 40 per cent off Jil Sander; 30 per cent off Christian Lacroix, eg, ladies' turquoise jacket was £269, sale price £189; 40 per cent off French Connection knitwear, jackets, coats and skirts: 30 per cent off selected Dolce & Gabbana; 50 per cent off Kenzo. Escada and Donna Karan; up to 50 per cent off selected toiletries including Plenitude and Crabtree & Evelyn. Menswear: 30 per cent off Calvin Klein jeans and shirts, Armani jeans and Ralph Lauren; Burberry classic trench coat was £625, now £399; Cerruti ties were £55, now £29.95; 30-50 per cent off selected childrenswear including Paul Smith. DKNY.

☐ Harvey Nichols 109-125 Knightsbridge, SWI

(0171-235 5000). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off many items. During the first four days of the sale there will be an additional 10 per cent discount for Harvey Nichols' account holders on all reduced merchandise. CK jeans were £99, sale price £44.50; Ann Demeulemeester black jacket was £650, sale price £325; Versus by Gianni Versace tuxedo was £875, sale price £437.50; Georgio Armani navy suit was £695, sale price £495; women's Dolce & Gabbana mohair jacket was £780, sale price £468; Michael Kors leather trousers were E980, sale price £490; Calvin Klein jersey dress was £900, sale price

per cent off; also 30 per cent off selected Caroline Charles lines. Carpets and flooring: 10 per cent off Amtico flooring; 12 per cent off Bruce Wood flooring; 65 per cent off Zermatt. Pembroke Twist and Perfection carpets. REGIONAL

□ Bentalls High Street, Bracknell, Berkshire (01344 424678); Broadway Centre, Ealing, London W5 (0181-567 3040): Wood Street, Kingston upon Thames, southwest London (0181-546 1001); Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock, Essex (01708 860077); The Angel Centre, Tonbridge, Kent (01732 771177); 19-23 South Street, Worthing, West Sussex (01903 231801). General inquiries (0181-546 2002). From Dec 27 for chargecard holders, Dec 28 general public Up to 50 per cent off most lines.

High Street, Yeovil, Somerset (01935 444444). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off a wide range of men's and women's fashions and

Lauren selected throws 50 per cent ens cashmere mix coats were £495, off; Designers Guild seconds, 30 sale price £325; short brown hersale price £325; short brown herring bone coat with velvet collar from £450 to £295; doe skin blazers from £375 to £250; men's blazers down from £295 to £195; men's double rain mac from £455 to £285.

> ☐ Armando Pollini 35 Brook Street, W1 (0171-629 7606). From Dec 27 to early Feb. From 30 to 50 per cent reductions: brown knee elastic boots from £199 to £139; black leather bag from £285 to £142_

☐ Austin Reed Branches nationwide (0800) 585479). From Dec 27. Menswear: barn coat from £169 to

£99; 25 per cent off selected cotton shirts; half-price silk ties. Womenswear: taupe herringbone wool jacket from £249 to £179; selected pure wool knitwear from £49 to £29.95.

Branches nationwide (0171-731 4557). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent reductions.

☐ Bertie 36 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-493 5033); 26 branches nationwide, inquiries (0171-935 2002). From Dec 21.

Selected items up to 50 per cent off, eg, women's trenchosats were £575, sale price £375; men's blazers were £325, sale price £185.

Branches nationwide (0321 287866). From Dec 27 for four Many lines up to a third off.

□C&A Branches nationwide (0171-629 1244). From Dec 27. Glasgow, Aberdeen, Kilbride, Dec 26. Up to 50 per cent discount on fashion for all the family.

□ Chanel 26 Old Bond Street, WI (017!-493 5040); 31 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 6631). From Jan 4-11. Minimum of 30 per cent off all ready-to-wear autumn/winter collection 1996 and a selection of shoes

and accessories.

☐ Country Casuals I-5 Poland Street, WI (0171-287 5181); branches nationwide (0121-212 2405). Sale now on-Reductions up to 50 per cent. Jersey shirts were £39.95, sale price £19.95; burnt orange tweed jackets were £99.95, sale price £74.95; navy knit dresses were £65.95, sale price



Versace and Moschino. ☐ House of Fraser Army & Navy, Victoria Street, SWI (0171-834 1234); Barkers, Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-937 5432); Dickins & Jones, Regent Street, W1 (0171-734 Dec 27. Scotland: from Dec 26.

7070); D.H. Evans, Oxford Street, WI (0171-629 8800) and stores nationwide (0171-963 2236). From Menswear: up to one third off Pierre Balmain shirts; 40 per cent off Pringle knitwear: Daniel Hechter suit was £230, now £170; YSL logo boxer shorts were £16, sale price £8. Womenswear: up to 50 per cent off Marley scarfs; dogtooth three-quarter length jacket was £90, now £60; six-button reefer jacket was £75, now £49. Homeware: Slumberland Copper Seal 4-drawer divan set was £799,

£450; Givenchy bias dress was

£2,410, down to £1,205; Ann Demeulemeester bootleg trousers were £270, sale price £135; Dolce &

Gabbana black handbags were

£445, sale price £222.50; Calvin

Klein black handbags were £430. sale price £215; Ralph Lauren bath

towels down from £22.50 to £16.50;

hands towels were £12, sale price

policy is still in operation during the clearance period. Branches sell good quality seconds throughout the sale and well-priced lines bought by John Lewis at favourable rates under their special purchase' scheme with manufacturers. Philips FW 18 micro Hi-Fi systems from £329 to £199. Seconds: polyester/cotton Jonelle percale single sheets from £10.75 to £7.50; double sheets from £13 to £9.75; kingsize from £15 to £11.25. China: Mixed Vegetable tea pots from £29.50 to £17.50; Check and Dot 27in plate from £8.50 to £4.95; Johnson Brothers' Marie range breakfast cups from £4.95 to £2.95. China seconds: Blue Italian 25cm plates from £8.50 to £4.95: Toast & Marmalade teapots from £33 to £19.75; Worcester cakeplates from £14.50 to £21.75. Curtain seconds: Solitaire plain satin 168x136cm from £49 to £25; 214x220cm from E35 to £16.50. Dress fabric seconds: 228cm cotton/polyester plain sheet-ing from £6.50 to £2.95. Duvets reduced to clear: Jonelle Novaloft polyester 12-tog single duvets from £23 to £17.50; king-size from £43 to £31: superking from £51 to £39. Reduced furnishing fabric per me-tre: dupion from £7.95 to £3.95:

now £499; Henley large sofa was £1,090, sale price £990. Electrical:

Toshiba 28in colour television was

£649, now £469; JVC Mini System £499, now £379; up to 50 per cent off

selected china and glass.

730 3434) and 23 stores

Oxford Street, WI (0171-629 7711); Brent Cross Shopping Centre (0181-202 6535); Peter

31; call 0171-629 7711 to find

which date is correct for your

Jones, Sloane Square, SWI (0171-

nationwide. From Dec 28 and Dec

Up to 50 per cent off selected lines

The "never knowingly undersold"

☐ John Lewis

nearest branch.

214-220 Regent Street, WI. and branches nationwide (0171-734 1234). From Dec 27 for three weeks.

£6.95.

moire from £9.95 to £4.95; tapestries from £19.50 to £9.95 and semi-plain fabrics from £13.50 to £7; printed Primrose Hill in grass and eggshell print from £8.95 to £4.95;

Azalea print from £12.50 to £5.95: Portofino print from £13.50 to

Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store. Pewterframed mirror sconces were £55. sale price £40; five-arm steel chandeliers were £225, sale price £150; Armenian rug was £5.600, sale price £2.800; Turkish Burdur carpet was £1,950, sale price £975; Iranian kilim was ES50, sale price £425: Bassano robes were £115, sale price £75; king duvets were £319, sale price £159; Peter Reed Egyptian cotton single sheets were £39. sale price E29: white goose-down pillows were £85, sale price £42.50; Missoni robes were £145, sale price £99; Laure Japy Figaree dimner plates were £30, sale price £15; Dartington burgundy glasses were £13.25, sale price £7.95; Wedgwood California dinner plates were £19.95, sale price £9.95; Lagostina cookware four-piece pan set was £169.95, sale price £84.95; Carrs silver cutlery 44-piece set was £2,799, sale price £1,399; Sabatier six-inch cook's knile was £34.95, sale price £23.95; chef's butcher's apron was £19.95, sale price £9.95: raditional roll-arm sofa was £2.395, sale price £1,195; Liberty

was £19.75, sale price £9.95; Liberty print cushions were 535, sale price £25. Womenswear: Gucci silk hipster pants were £509, sale price £254: Issey Miyake quilt coat was £1,370. sale price £685; Gaultier skirts were £395, sale price £197; Vivienne Westwood navy wool cardigan was £139, sale price £69; Romeo Gigli velvet jacket was £755, sale price £377: Liberty orange wool jacket was £189, sale price £94.

☐ Selfridges
Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629) 1234). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off items

throughout the store. Womenswear: Jasper Conran parent jacket down from £499 to £349; CK basic jeans down from £79 to £55; Polo Ralph Lauren selected lines up to 30 per cent off: Workers for Freedom shirt down from £195 to £136. Menswear: Paul Smith. Giorgio Armani Le Collezioni and Calvin Klein selected lines up to 30 per cent off: selected YSL suits down from 5325 to 5225. Childrenswear: DKNY, Moschino, Versace and Armani selected lines all have 50 per cent off. China and crystal: Dartington crystal selected seconds 40 per cent off: Aynsley tableware selected seconds 33 per cent off. PVC furnishing fabric by the metre Linens and bathshop: Ralph

☐ Hoopers The Promenade, Cheltenham (01242 527505); North Street, Chichester, West Sussex (01243) 533103): The Strand, Torquay

(01803 212754); Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells (01892 530222): Hoopers for Men. The Great Hall, Tunbridge Wells (01892 529223) and Alderley Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire (01625 525381); Allerton Road, Bradford (01274 491311); James Street, Harrogate (01423 504091). For further details freecall 0800 318216. From Dec 27-Jan 18. Up to 50 per cent off womenswear. including designer labels such as Jasper Conran. Valentino. Moschino and Jean Muir. Also special bargains in the linen and china

FASHION

☐ Amanda Wakeley 80 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-584 4009). From Jan 17. From 30 to 50 per cent off daywear.

☐ Aquascutum 100 Recent Street, W1 (0800) 282922), From Dec 27. From 30 to 50 per cent off selected lines throughout the store. WomAnkle boots were £75, sale price £45; loafers were £69.95, sale price £44.95; mock croc knee-length boots were £59.99, sale price

☐ Betty Jackson 311 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-589 7884). From Dec 27-mid

All reductions are 50 per cent. eg. black leather three-quarter length trench coat was £\$45, sale price £422; cashmere polo sweater was £599, sale price £298; wool mohair coat was £479, sale price £239.

☐ Bhs 252-258 Oxford Street, W1 (0171-262 3288): 139 branches nationwide. From Dec 26 in Scotland, Dec 27 rest of UK. A third off selected items across all departments.

23-27 South Molton Street, W! (0171-491 7833). From Dec 27 while Up to 30 per cent off a wide selection of items.

☐ Barberry 18-22 Flaymarker, SW1; 165 Regent Street, W1 (0171-930 3343). From Dec 27.

55 Argyle Street, WCI (0171-833 2255). From Jan 2. Up to 30 per cent reduction on

🗌 Donna Karan 19 New Bond Street, WI (0171-495 3100). From Dec 27. Discounts off selected items.

□ DKNY 27 Old Bond Street, W1 (017)-499 8089). From Dec 27. Discounts up to 30 per cent off autumn/winter collection.

Dorothy Perkins Branches nationwide (0171-291 2604). From Dec 26 (Scotland). Dec 27 rest of UK for four Many items at half-price.

☐ Emporio Armani 191 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-823 8818); 57-59 Long Acre. WC2 (0171-917 6882); 112a New Bond Street, WI (0171-491 8080): 84-86 King Street, Manchester M2 (0161-839 8789); 19 John Street, The Italian Centre; Glasgow GI (0141-552 2277). From Dec 27; Manchester and Glasgow branches Dec 28. Reductions from 25 per cent.



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| £32 (A year's family membership for two adults and all children un
| 16 at one address. Attach name and date of birth of each child. OR please deduct this sum from my Access/Visa card no:

Send to: The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds FREEPOST, Sandy, Beds 5G19 2BR. لأ أثملت هاك جبري ينصل إليان البريج بي

... from designer labels to tables. When push comes to shove, Caroline Griffiths has an eye for the best buys

☐ Episode 172 Regent Street, W1 (0171-439 3561) and branches nationwide (0171-589 4279). Sale now on. Leather jacket from £499 to £349 leather skirts from £199 to £139; 100 per cent wool coats from £299 to

☐ French Connection 249 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (017)-580 2507). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

Georges Rech 181-182 Sioane Street, SW1 (0171-235 3343). Also Ferwick, Harrods Harvey Nichols and Selfridges. From Dec 27. Up to 20 per cent off eveningwear and 50 per cent off shoes.

☐ Gianni Versace 34-35 Old Bond Street, WI (0171-499 1862); Italian Centre, Glasgow (0141-552 6510). From Jan 8. Thirty per cent off selected stock.

🗆 Giorgio Armani 37 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 6232). From Dec 27. No more details at time of going to

W. W. W.

261-271 Regent Street, W1 (0171-493 4004). Other branches: Brent Cross, Marble Arch, Kingston upon Thames, Harrow, Croydon, Watford, Wimbledon and nationwide. Inquiries: 0171-255 2031. From Dec 23. Discounts up to 50 per cent.

Up to 50 per cent off a range of classic jackets, tops and bodies; 30 per cent off selected jumpers and

☐ Ken Lane 30 Burlington Arcade, WI (0171-499 1364) and 58 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (0171-584 1985). From Dec 27-Jan 31. Up to 50 per cent off a wide selection of items.

☐ Kingshill Mail Order For copies of the Kingshill British Designer Collections catalogue and the Diffusion catalogue (£11 or £10 for a subscription, which is refunded f you place an order) call 01494 890555, or fax 01494 866003.

Sale now on. From now, 30 per cent off all designer styles in both catalogues; from Jan 2 until Jan 20, the reductions will increase to 50 per cent and will also include a selection of items from the Christmas catalogue.

☐ Kockai 123 Kensington High Street, W8; 25 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-937 4411. From Up to 30 per cent discount on

☐ Lillywhites 24-36 Regent Street, SWI (0171-915 4000). Eight branches nationwide. From Dec 27. Discounts on many lines at 25-50 per cent off.

Up to 50 per cent off autumn/ winter collection: Josephine floral print long dress from £70 to £34.97; Aran cardigans from £60 to £34.95; beaded trim twinsets from £39.95 to £24.95; velvet evening dress from £85 to £55.

☐ Malberry 41-42 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 4323); 185 Brompton Road, SW1 (0171-225 0313); 23-25 Swinegate, York (01904 61 1055). From Dec 27-Jan 11. Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

□ Muji 26 Great Mariborough Street, WI (0171-494 [197]. From Dec 27. Bedlinen: XL duvet cover was £39.95, sale price £26.

☐ Next Three hundred branches nationwide. Inquiries 0116-284 9424. From Dec 27 for two

Up to 50 per cent off most items.

□ Nicole Farhi 158 New Bond Street, WI (0171-499 8368); 193 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 0877); 12 Floral Street, WC2 (0171-497 8713); 25-26 St Christopher's Place, WI (0171-486 3416); 27 Hampstead High Street, NW3 (0171-435 0866). From now until mid-Jan. Up to 40 per cent reductions on

Nougat at Fenwicks, Brent Cross Shopping Centre (0181-202 DAVID JUNIPER 8200); House of Fraser, Metro Centre, Gateshead (0191-493 2424): Binns of Middlesbrough (01642 246371): Guilty by Design, Edinburgh (0131-447 8187); Great Clothes Ltd, Leeds (0) 13-235 Dec 27. 0800) and Jill Black, Barton Arcade, Manchester (0161-834

5160). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent of selected items including angora sweaters; shan-tung silk shirts and suits; shift dresses and belted jackets.

🗆 Oasis

292 Regent Street, WI. and branches nationwide (0171-452 1000). From Dec 26 until end Jan. Up to 50 per cent off selected items. Tan suede jacket from £109.99 to £69.99; black leather jeans from £129.99 to £69.99; small leather dispatch bag from E45.99 to E22.99; red crepe suit jacket was £89.99, sale price £59.99.

☐ Osh Kosh B'Gosh 17 King's Road, SW3 (0171-730 1341). From Dec 23. Up to 50 per cent off selected

☐ Patrick Cox 8 Symons Street, SW3 (0171-730 6504). Patrick Cox Wannabe, 129 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-730) 8886). From Dec 28 until end Jan. Up to 40 per cent off men's shoes and 30 per cent off ladies; 40 per cent off diffusion lines and 60 per cent off Wannabes.

Paul Smith 40-44 Floral Street, WC2; 10 Byard Lane, Nottingham (0115-250 6712); 66-68 Bridge Street, Manchester (0161-831 9111). Inquiries 0171-379 7133. Paul Smith Jeans, 9-11 Langley Court, WC2. From Jan 10 at London branches and Nottingham. From Jan 4 at Manchester. Discounts up to 30 per cent for three weeks.

43-45 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 0008). Up to 30 per cent off autumn/ winter collections.

□ Ravel 184-188 Oxford Street, WI (0171-436 3126) and branches nationwide (0171-631 0224).

Sale now on.
From 25 to 40 per cent reductions. Suede loafers with snaffle were £29.99, sale price £20; high-heeled satin sandals were £49.99, sale price £29; grey beaded satin highheeled court shoes were £39.99, sale price £29.

I Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 1335). From Dec 27.

Up to 40 per cent off all stock Suede high boots were £125, sale price £75; long print kaftans were £110, sale price £66; black suede

□ Reiss The Reiss Building. 114 King's Road, SW3; 116 Long Acre, WC2; 245 Regent's Street, W1; and branches in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow (0171-225 4900). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off a selection of

□ River Island Branches nationwide (0181-998 8822). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent of a selection of

☐ Russell & Bromley 24-25 New Bond Street, London WI; 41 branches nationwide. Inquiries (0171-629 6903). From Dec 20. Discounts from 30-50 per cent until

☐ The Scotch House 2 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, SWI; 84-86 Regent Street, W1: 39-41 Princes Street, Edinburgh (0171-581 2151). From

Up to 40 per cent off a wide selection of items. Ladies' cashmere round-neck cardigan was £195, sale price £139; men's cashmere V-neck sweater was £195, sale price £139; cashmere scarves were £45, down

☐ Suppson Piccadilly 203 Piccadilly, Wl. Customer inquiries (0800 288 188). From Dec

Half-price collection includes Mondi, Amanda Wakeley, Louis Feraud, Louise Kennedy, Synonyme and Antonette. Up to 50 per cent off YSL Variation, Guy Laroche, Paul Costelloe, Fink. Simpson Collection, Betty Barclay, Pringle, Geiger, Weekend by Maxmara and Four Seasons. In addition there will be an extra 10 per cent off on Dec 27, 9-10am, and all day Dec 29.

□ Snow and Rock

188 Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-937 0872); 8 Grays Inn Road, WCI (0171-831 6900); St Albans Hill. Hemel Hempstead, Herts (01442 235305): 14 Priory Queensway, Birmingham (0121-236 8280); Vale Road, Parkwood Springs, Sheffield (01)4-275 1700). Enquiries, (01932 569569). From Dec 26 or Dec 27, check branch for details. Discounts up to 30 per cent off skiwear and accessories. Goode Tiger 9103 ski poles from £79.95 to 159.95; Rollerblade Tarmac from £219.95 to £179.95; Nordica Vertech 75 men's boots from £169.95 to £99.95; Nordica Vertech 65 ladies boots from £139.95 to £89.95; Rossignol V2G skis with Saloman Q600 bindings from £214 to £114.

☐ Tie Rack 487 Oxford Street, W1: 49 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0181-230 2333). From Dec 26 (London stores) and Dec 27 (nationwide) until Jan

Up to 50 per cent off selected items. ☐ Timberland

72 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-495 2139). Inquiries (0345 669988). From Dec 27. Up to 25 per cent discount.

☐ Vaientino 174 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 5855); Miss Valentino, 160 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 2698). From now until end Jan-Up to 40 per cent off womenswear and 30 per cent off menswear.

☐ Vivienne Westwood 6 Davies Street, W1 (0171-629 3757); 43 Conduit Street, W1 (0171-439 [109]; World's End, 430 6551). From early January. No details at going to press.

□ Wallis 217 Oxford Street, WI, and branches nationwide (0181-910 1333). From Dec 23. Up to 50 per cent off selected items

☐ Warehouse 19-21 Argyll Street, WI [017]-437 7101): 75 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-278 3491. From Dec 27. Discounts of up to half-price on party wear, tailoring and jewellery.

☐ Watches of Switzerland 16 New Bond Street, WI (0171-493 5916): branches nationwide (0171-931 7171). From Dec 27. Up to 50 per cent off a wide range of famous Swiss watches including Tag Heuer, Omega, Breitling,

Longines and Ebel. Gents bi-colour Omega bracelet watch was £995, sale price £497; Gents steel and yellow metal Breitling Chronological was £2,365, sale price £1,773.75; Ladies titanium Conquest bracelet watch was £695, sale price £347.

☐ Whistles 12-14 St Christopher's Place. W1, and branches nationwide (0171-487 4484). From Dec 27. From 25 to 50 per cent off selected

☐ Yves Saint Laurent rive gauche Femme 33 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 6706); 135 New Bond Street, WI (0171-493 1800). From Dec 27. Up to 40 per cent off all autumn/winter stock

HOMES AND INTERIORS

☐ Bridgewater / Matthew Rice 789 Fulham Road, SW6 (017)-371 9033). From Jan 8-25, open on Jan 12 midday-4pm. 4th Floor Harvey Nichols. From Jan 27. At least 40 per cent off pottery, glass, cookware, linens, seconds and samples. Discontinued stationery lines 50 per cent off.

☐ The Conran Shop Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-589 7401). From Jan 4 for two weeks or while

Reductions of 30 per cent on exdisplay upholstery and furniture. Generous reductions on discontinued ranges throughout the shop. Bargains in damaged goods and

C.P. Hart Newnham Terrace, Hercules Road, SEI (0171-902 1000). From Jan 18 for two weeks. Up to one third off bathroom products and accessories includes cast-iron roll-top bath for £295, reduced from £450.

□ Damask 3-4 Broxholme House, New King's Road, SW6 (0171-731 3553). From Jan 8. From 25 to 50 per cent off selected nightwear, gifts and home furnishings.

☐ David Mellor 4 Sloane Square, SW1 (0171-730 4259). From Jan 4-18. Ten per cent discount on all standard merchandise, 20 per cent discount on most ranges of David Mellor cutlery and up to 90 per cent discount on slightly damaged or shop-soiled merchandise.

☐ Descamps 197 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 6957). From Dec 27 for three

Up to 30 per cent off bed linen and bathrobes, including a double duvet cover reduced from £149 to 103.90 and pilloweases reduced from £33.90 to £22.90.

☐ Designers Guild Store 267 King's Road, SW3 (0171-243 7300). From Jan 11-25. Discounts on fabric, upholstery, bedlinen, wallpaper, tableware and accessories.

☐ Designers Guild Warehouse 6 Relay Road, Ariel Way off Wood Lane, W12. From Jan 18-26. (Sale hotline: 0171-243 7343.) Only fabric and wallpaper are available at the Warehouse.

□ Divertimenti 45-47 Wigmore Street, WI (0171-935 0689); 39-41 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 8065). From Jan 11-25.

Fifty per cent discount on Quimper traditional hand-painted Breton china and 40 per cent off Pilluvuit Whiteware. Also bargains on slight seconds.

☐ General Trading Company 144 Sloane Street, ŠW1 (0171-730 04]]); 10 Argyle Street, Bath (01225 461507); 2-4 Dyer Street, Cirencester (01285 652314). From Jan 4-25.

Reductions of up to 50 per cent on merchandise throughout shop, including San Marco range of Italian ceramics.

☐ Graham & Green 4,7 and 10 Elgin Crescent, W11 (0171-727 4594), From Jan 3-31. Wrought-iron three-seater sofa complete with cushions reduced from £1,337 to half-price, and a Dutch pine wardrobe reduced by £300 to £465; 25 per cent off all kilims, rugs and runners; 20 per cent off Davenport china seconds. Mulberry personal accessories range has 20 per cent off.

☐ Habitat Forty stores nationwide (0645 334433). From Dec 27. Furniture: 50 per cent saving on metal/Formica-topped folding regatta table in blue and up to 30 per cent off sofas made to order in any fabric 30 per cent off Border bedlinen and 20 per cent off Matarang 5ft metal bed. Kitchenware: 50 per cent off Fruit Garden embossed dinnerware range and 50 per cent off Somerset glassware

☐ Heal's 196 Tottenham Court Road, W1: 234 King's Road, SW3; Tunsgate, Guildford, Surrey (0171-636 1666). From Dec 27-Jan

Reductions in all departments with up to 20 per cent off most normal stock dining tables, chairs, occasional tables and upholstery; 30 per cent off selected cookware, canteens of cutlery and clear glass vases; 50 per cent off discontinued linens and all basketware at Tottenham Court ☐ The Holding Company 243-245 King's Road, SW3 (0171-352 1600; mail order 0171-610 9160). From Dec 27-Jan 11.
Ten per cent off all chrome racking and Alpha shelving systems; 20 per cent off all canvas storage products, fabric covered boxes and children's plastic storage items.

☐ Jane Churchill 151 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-730 9847); Liberty, Regent Street, WI (0171-734 1234); 3A Christopher Place, St Albans, Hertfordshire (01727 860293); 13 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge (01223 323211), From Dec 27 in Liberty and Dec 28 in other stores. Twenty-five per cent off selected imperfect fabrics and wallpapers. 30 per cent off selected bedlinen, reductions on all upholstered furniture orders and up to 50 per cent off selected decorative accessories, ce-ramics. lighting, lampshades, glassware and gift items.

☐ Jerrys Home Store
163 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 0909); 57 Heath Street, Hampstead, NW3 (0171-794 8622); The Bentall Centre, Kingston upon Thames. southwest London (0181-549 5393): Home on Four, Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, SWI (0171-245 6251). From Dec 27 (Dec 26 in Kingston), Smart Buys start on Jan 8 until end Feb. Fifty per cent off selected items including linen throws from E75 to E37.50 and one third off other items such as Signum Swedish stainless steel cutlery and selected kitchen gadgets.

☐ The Monogrammed Linen

Shop 168 Walton Street, SW3 [017]-589 4033) and Harvey Nichols. From Jan 2 (Dec 27 in Harvey Nichols) until end Jan. Cotton bedlinen reduced by 20 per cent including Peter Reed, Oliver DesForges, French Linen Company and Jesuruin. Assorted designs of towels reduced by 20 per cent plus others.

☐ Paperchase 213 Tottenham Court Road, W1, plus 11 other shops nationwide; for nearest branch: 0171-580 8496. From Dec 27 to end

One third off selected Christmas stock. Knockdown prices on some summer furniture including chairs, candlesticks, vases, stacking boxes, rugs. Large seagrass woven rug reduced to £5.

☐ The Pier Stores nationwide; for nearest branch: 0171-637 7001. From Dec

Price reductions range from 20 to 50 per cent, including Shaker dining chair in green reduced from £75 to £59, Savannah wicker furniture 20 per cent off and Ticking Stripe blue and white porcelain 25 per cent off.

☐ Purves & Purves 80-81 and 83 Tottenham Court Road, WI (0171-580 8223). From Dec 28-Jan 22. Up to 40 per cent off ex-display furniture, 10 per cent off any single item over £500 and 50 per cent off discontinued lines of accessories.

SCP Furniture Ltd 135-139 Curtain Road, EC2 (0171-739 1869). From Jan 4-Feb 1. Up to 50 per cent discounts on floor samples; discounts of up to 15 per cent on all items ordered during

Simon Horn Furniture Ltd 117-121 Wandsworth Bridge Road, SW6 (0171-731 1279). From

Jan 2-31. Up to 35 per cent off selected beds and 10 per cent off all orders placed during sale; one third off 78 per cent mohair blankets in three colourways; ash four-poster beds from £2,820 to £1,990 and metal four posters from £2,352 to £1,452.

☐ Smallbone of Devizes 105-109 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 9989). From Dec 28-Jan

Substantial reductions on bespoke kitchens, bedroom and bathroom

☐ The Source 26-40 Kensington High Street. W8 (0171-938 2626); Lakeside Retail Park, West Thurrock, Essex (01708 890253): 10 Harbour Parade, Southampton (01703 336141). From Dec 27.

Up to 50 per cent off selected lines. Egyptian cotton duvet set from £19.95 to £9.95; Ashma bedspread from £35.95 to £17.95; double patchwork quilts were £79.95, sale price £39.95; single patchwork quilts were £69.95, sale price £34.95; bath towels were £10.95, sale price £5.95; Horrocks bath sheets were £10.50, sale price £8.40; Horrocks hand towels were £3.50, sale price £2.80; washed durries were £89.95, sale price £44.95; ribbed cushions were £8.95, sale price £4.45; gingham kitchen aprons were £5.75, sale price £2.85.

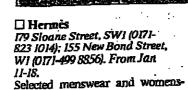
☐ White House 51 New Bond Street, WI (0171-629 3521). Dec 29 preview; sale Jan

2 for two weeks. Fifteen per cent off all stock in all departments: 20 per cent off wornen's fashions with some merchandise reduced by up to 50 per cent.

● Information correct at time of going to press. Dates and reductions may change at short notice. Please check with specific shops before making a special trip.

● Additional research by Alex Wijeratne





wear at sale prices. ☐ Jacget 200-206 Regent Street, WI (0171-200 4000), 100 stores nationwide, general inquiries (0171-200 4211). From Dec 27. Discounts from 17-55 per cent. Camel cashmere stole from £169 to £99; suede gloves with zebra cuffs from £49 to £24.50; Jaeger London wool mix coat from £350 to £249; Jaeger London brown belted jacket from £320 to £219; brown wide leg

26 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 5470]: 23 Old Bond Street, WI (0171-629 3713); 28 Brook Street, WI (0171-629 6077): 124 Draycott Avenue, SW3 (0171-225 0364); 77 Fulham Road, SW3, and general inquiries (0171-823 9500). From

Reductions 30 per cent or more.

trouser from £140 to £89.

☐ Karen Millen Branches nationwide (01622 664032). From Dec 26.

Dec 27.

☐ Marks & Spencer Marble Arch, Oxford Street, W1 (0171-935 7954): 286 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-935 4422. From Dec 27. Moorgate branch not included. End of season clearance.

☐ Marmara 32 Sloane Street, SWI (0171-235 7941); 153 New Bond Street, WI (0171-491 4748). From Jan 4. Up to 20-40 per cent off Maxmara and Sportmax. Grey woollen/ cashmere suit from £413 to £249; fake fur coat from £768 to £459; violet devoré dress from £705 to £489; cream boot cut trousers from £98 to £79.

☐ Miss Selfridge Branches nationwide: 0181-910 1359. From Dec 27. Up to 55 per cent off selected jackets, ponteroma jacket was £55. sale price £25; £10 off tailored trousers; half-price selected coloured suede trousers, now £40; 40 per cent off selected coloured suede safari-style jackets; velour side-split skirts were £35, sale price £15; half-

price quilted jackets, fur collar

parkas were £40, sale price £20. Monsoon Branches nationwide (0171-313 3000). From Dec 27.



MANCHESTER SHOP BY TRAM

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Holiday tips for all those party animals

James Allcock, The Times vet, offers

valuable advice for the festive season

hen it comes to Christmas, most animals agree with Scrooge the better, and they can get back to their daily routine.

It is not just pets who have a hard

time: pigeons living on crumbs falling from commuters' sand-wiches go hungry when main line stations are deserted. Urban foxes find less to eat when takeaways are closed and office and factory cats have to make do with an extra few saucers of milk to see them over the holiday. Fortunate school pets will go home with one of the pupils. Those left in classrooms will be lonely, and cold if the heating is set low to save fuel.

Farm animals do better. Many are indoors at this time of year and routine feeding and watering goes on as usual. Dairy cows have to be milked whether it is Christmas or not, providing the milk you will be drinking next weekend.

My son's ewes started lambing last week. He's on 24 hour watch. I'm on stand-by for emergency sheep midwifery duty.

But what about pets? Try to keep to their regular timetable. Getting up four hours later than normal puts an excessive strain on any dog's bladder. He needs his daily walk - don't miss out because it's Christmas. But if he is getting on in years and usually goes a gentle mile or so to the pub. don't take him for a four-hour hike — you'll both be stiff and sore on Boxing Day.

If your pet's supper time is 5pm, don't make it wait until you have finished dinner and done the washing-up. Tiny bits of ham or turkey, a tablespoon of cream and a couple of chocolate drops won't hurt any dog or cat. But keep it at that. Don't leave chocolates on the sofa overnight or a jug of cream within cat-lapping distance. A pound of chocolates can be a lethal dose for a medium-sized dog and if the cat drinks too much cream there will be a nasty mess to clear up the next morning.

There are plenty of safety requirements about children's toys, it hardly any about gifts for Dogs are mainly at risk. They'll chew and swallow plastics and they have been operated on to recover the squeak from the toy mouse given to the cat. Small, hard rubber balls can be dangerous. An overexcited dog jumps to catch it, mouth wide open and the ball is small enough to lodge at the back of the throat and kill the dog. An inch larger than a tennis ball is the minimum safe size.

Lively parties may also pose problems. Make sure there's a quiet spot so your pet can retire

from the fray. If your budgie lives anywhere near the kitchen, beware of non-stick pans when you forget to take them off the heat and they boil dry. Fumes from these pans have killed a number of birds. Fish are not totally safe if the party turns into a rave. An unwanted vodka or cigarette end dropped into an aquarium makes the water uninhabitable. Close-fitting tank tops are essential. And when the party is over, check that no one has switched off the heater or filter.

If pet-loving but petless children are guests, do not let dogs, cats. guinea pigs, rabbits, gerbils or rats be overwhelmed with embraces. Don't worry too much about hamsters. Every one I have handled has made his feelings crystal clear by biting the hand that holds it.

Dogs and cats belonging to elderly aunts may not appreciate children, so when Great Aunt is visiting it would be kind to suggest the pets in her life are tucked away before the children descend.

One post-Christmas question that crops up every year is what to do with the turkey/chicken/goose/ duck carcass. It is linked with the worry about chicken bones piercing a dog's intestines. I do not believe this has ever happened. There is no mention of it in reputable veterinary literature. My does have had chicken bones for at least 40 years without trouble.

oxes, rural and urban, eat plenty of chicken bones cooked or killed and eaten raw. Their intestines are indistinguishable from a dog's. I'm not recommending poultry bones for dogs, however, and certainly don't give leftover turkey skin -explosive diarrhoea often follows.

A better destination for Christmas leftovers is food for wild birds. The fatty bits can be a life saver in cold weather. The wire mesh hanging basket that is filled with fuchsias, lobelia and petunias in summer can do all-year-round duty, swinging from a tree, holding poultry remains and bones of any other sort. But, once a wild-bird kept open until late spring. If food supplies fail, some of the birds saved in January will die before Valentine's Day. Bird tables, window ledge feeders or bags of peanuts must be kept topped up.

Christmas charity should include your vet. Not money or even alcohol, but consideration. There will be someone on duty if a real emergency occurs, but don't ask for a repeat prescription at lunchtime on Christmas Day, when he is already booked to perform delicate surgery on the roast turkey.



James Allcock with his grandson James, aged three, and Finty the Staffordshire bull terrier. Dogs need extra care at Christmas



Tiny has become inseparable from his friend

ADOPT ME

BRUNO is a 13-year-old black labrador with a grey muzzle. Tiny is a two-yearold white and tan lack Russell who has become Both dogs have a good temperament, are in good health and need to be rehomed together. As Bruno is an older dog, he has been placed under the National Canine Defence League's fostering scheme, which means that any vet fees will be met by the NCDL Contact the NCDL Rescue Centre, 60 Teeshan Road, Ballymena, County Antrim. Northern Ireland BT43 5PN

the brain which are supposed-

pulses in the brain can cause

physical ailments, they say, so

correct the impulses and you

correct the ailment. Each de-

vice is programmed following

a scan of the sufferer's

brainwaves. Empulse is par-ticularly used for those suffer-

ing from the headaches from

hell and that means women -

four times as many women as

men get migraines. Many doctors believe that migraines

are caused when the brain's

alpha and theta waves drop to

I saw Mr Bartlett at his

Reading clinic. He trained as

an osteopath and still practises,

but his technological bent

meant that Empulse intrigued

him. He spent an initial 16

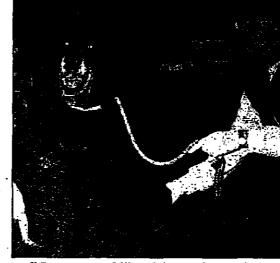
hours learning how to use the

equipment and takes part in

below certain levels.

Abnormal electrical im-

ly deficient.



All Bruno's vet's bills will be met by the charity

A VET WRITES

Our grandson, Charles, who is nearly ten, wants a pet rat. He is fascinated by them. Do you think he is old enough to have one for Christmas? His parents are unenthusiastic, but resigned.

Bloth

Charles is just about old A enough, but Christmas is the worst possible time to introduce a new pet. Too many other things are going on. Buy him a book about rat keeping and enrol him as a member of the National Fancy Rat Society. Juvenile membership costs £6 and the membership co-ordinator is Davida Krill, 14 Clayhall House, Somers Close, Reigate, Surrey RHZ 9FB.

You could also give him an IOU for two rats not to be cashed until April 1997 and only if he has learnt all about rat keeping. The Easter holidays, when summer follows, are a much better time to start any new animal venture.

Lucky, our cat, was hit by a car six weeks ago. and now his tail is paralysed and just drags behind. He no other injuries so perhaps he was lucky. Our vet says there is no hope of the tail recovering and it should be amoutated. Why Lucky does not worry about his non-working tail.

A Lucky does not worry about his paralysed tail because he does not know it is there. So he won't realise if it catches alight when he gets too close to an electric fire and it could become trapped in a door without him knowing about it.

Less spectacularly, the paralysed tail will drag on the ground, get damaged, dirty and in time become gangrenous. It is much better to operate now, on a healthy cat. than have an emergency later when (un)Lucky has devel-oped blood poisoning.

When I was very young citizen for more than ten vears — I remember my grandfather's dogs always had a lump of sulphur in their water bowl. He swore by it and I never knew any of his dogs to be ill. I thought I would try it for my cross-bred spaniel but no one seems to have heard of it.

I remember rock sulphur but don't believe it ever did any good — and no harm either. These lumps of sulphur are totally insoluble in water and the piece your grandfather bought could have remained in the water bowl until today, without

changing shape or size. The dogs cannot get anything from it. Sulphur was, and still is, an effective treatment for mange, but that is when it is in a semi-soluble form and applied to the coat. Specialist laboratory chemical supplies might stock rock sulphur, but it is hardly worth the trouble of searching.

JAMES ALLCOCK Readers should write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, I Pennington Street, London

Stylish Suede Jacket



Made in a quality soft suede, our fabulous fully lined ladies jacket is stylishly designed, making it an essential for everyone's wardrobe this Winter. Available in a choice of chocolate brown or black, it's a fashion classic that will never go out of style. Exceptionally priced at only £59.95 inc. p&p.

- Full front button opening with durable metal buttons.
- Adjustable two-button trim on cuffs and side tabs.
- Deep, slanted side pockets.
- Inside pocket with suede trim. Full, lightly quilted lining to match
- colour of jacket. ■ Length, 71cm (28") nape to hem.
- Sizes S/M (10/12), M/L (14/16) and L/XL (18/20).

Jacket 100% suede, lining 50% polyester/ 50% acetate, quilting 100% polyester. Specialist dry clean only.

The Times Suede Jacket Offer

Migraine? I've had a brainwave ALTERNATIVELY SPEAKING

or technophobes like me.
Peter Bartlett qualifies
as an electronics wizard. When I asked for a copy of his CV, he tapped into his personal organiser and out it came, which is unsurprising given that he uses a space-age electronic therapy known as Empulse and waxes eloquent about technology as the interface between conventional and alternative medicine.

Empulse is a thing, not a therapy: watch-sized, white, plastic and lithium battery-operated, it looks like a powderpuff case. It can be worn in a pocker, clipped to clothes, strapped like a watch or hung around your neck - though this will entail you giving constant explanations. At night

you slip it under your pillow.
It was invented a decade ago by 37-year-old Steven Walpole, a former BT and IBM electronic engineer, who at first named the device Medigen and spent 12 years refining it. He had suffered searing migraines for years, which worsened after a car crash. He claims the attacks have all but ended since he started using

the renamed Empulse. The practice is simple — you wear the gadget. The theory is equally simple when summarised, but devilishly complicated when you get into talk of "delta" and "theta" frequencies and the mechanisms of

how the thing works. All activity in the body is controlled by brain waves variously called alpha, beta, delta, theta and other waves. The device produces a selection of these waves to promote, for example, relaxation thanks to alpha waves, or pain control thanks to theta waves. In theory. Empulse pumps out minute electromagnetic impulses every 12.7 seconds that boost the electrical impulses in



RACHEL KELLY

patients in the past year.

Treatment began with a consultation to discuss my headaches, then he slipped a Brain Frequency Analyser, which is rather like a slimline pair of head-phones, over my head for three minutes to analyse my brain frequencies. No, it is not connected to any direct currents. The result looks like a graph from a maths lesson: power up the

continuous training every two CHRIS HARRIS

A migraine sufferer learns about the Empulse action

left-hand column, and frequency along the bottom di-vided into "delta", theta", "alpha" and "beta": the frequency bands claimed to be linked to the physiological conditions which Empulse can relieve. Delta frequencies are associated with the subconscious and unconscious states, and deficiencies would be

months. He has treated 50

shown by insomnia. Theta frequencies are linked to creative thought; alpha frequencies with control of muscles. Mr Bartlett noticed that Ihad a couple of "theta" and "alpha" frequencies which were lower than average, indicating muscular stress. The game was to programme my Empulse to correct them. My particular frequency

boosters would help to reduce muscle tension and stress. which in turn were causing my headaches, he said. The trouble is I have no idea if it is

Empulse

■ What it is: a gadget that emits electronic signals which rebalance the body's electronic impulses.

Advantages: trials suggest that it works for migraine sufferers.

Disadvantages: not for the scatty; you must wear the gadget

Cost: £40 for first consultation, £160 for the

working or not. True, I have had fewer headaches recently but then I never had the mindsplitting migraines which are better litmus test of Empulse's efficacy. Therapists recommend that you wear Empulse for three months for the best results, with a consultation to adapt the frequencies after six weeks depending on your symptoms.

The manufacturers say trials last year found that 82 per cent of 265 migraine sufferers who responded to a survey reported a significant improvement after using the gadget. Almost a third said they felt perfectly well for the first time in years.

r George Lewith, from the Centre for the Study of Complementary Medicine in Southampton, describes the research as promising but not definitive. A second trial at the Koestler Foundation in London, supervised by the Queen's Physician, Dr Ronald Davey, in 1993 tested the response of 67 patients. The majority reported fewer migraine attacks.

It seems pricey: the first onehour consultation costs E40: each month's trial purchase costs £15 and the subsequent re-analysis and reset consultation costs £20. If you go ahead and buy the gadget, it costs £160, discounted by £10 for each month of paid trial. Mr Bartlett counters, however, that this is nothing compared to the cost of drugs for migraine-sufferers.

Peter Bartlett is on 01734
344203. Medical Devices and
Instrumentation (MDI) at
Cobbs Yard, St Nicholas Street. Diss, Norfolk IP22 3LB (01379 644234) manufactures Empulse and keeps a list of all UK



Blonde and pouting nanny wanted

hen the other half dra-matically disappears, with manifestly no idea of returning, priority No I is a childminder. I toy with the idea of an au pair. With my working hours it would have a distinct advantage. Antonia and Joanna give it the thumbs down.

"Where would she sleep?" Antonia demands. "I want my own room, like all my friends." Jo looks at me soulfully. "Do we really have to have someone living here?" "Most au pairs only come here to get boyfriends anyway," adds Antonia pointedly. "Eve Abrams says theirs doesn't lift a finger."

She might try and boss us around when you're not here," murmurs Jo. "Okay, okay," i rather witty. The girl in the small recoil. Antonia is not going to ads department of the local Twickbudge on the territorial issue, Jo's enham paper read it without murmurs Jo. "Okay, okay," i

not ready for a mother substitute. So how do you set about getting a childminder? Are

there agencies for this sort of thing? What sort of people are childminders? Is it a registered profession or are we talking about exploited teenage and OAP labour? My neighbours are short of ideas; even the usually together Eve can only suggest "Do what I did and put an ad in the paper".

It sounds fearfully hit and miss. Nevertheless: Childminder wanted for two daughters, 8 and 10, of beleaguered male. Help with homework as important as housework. Hours 4-ish to 11-ish, but sometimes later. I thought it

PERSONAL LIFE

amusement. Antonia and Jo are chuffed about being advertised in the paper. They have some idea it confers celebrity status on them. I've told them the paper doesn't come out until tomorrow, but they're in and out of the newsagents all day - for sweets.

It works! The phone hasn't stopped ringing. After the first half-dozen calls I felt a small glow of complacency. Another dozen and that feeling gives way to panic. Is there more to this than meets the eye? Might there be child molesters among this lot? I feel you ought to have had more training in this kind of thing.

I knew it! It's dangerous adver-

tising your vulnerabil-ities. I had the most unnerving phone call tonight A man. Male. 27. Had just come out of the Army

after three-and-a-half years. (Why, may I ask? I mean, no one serves for three-and-a-half years, do they?) He had had some "prob-lems" but they were behind him now. (Well, that's a relief!) He had seen the light and was training for the priesthood. A definite case of don't call us, we'll call you.

Antonia wonders why I burst into a hysterical cackle when she asks me if "anyone interesting" has called. My interview technique lacks finesse, but I'm trying to learn. People are throwing themselves at me from all quarters. One is from way out by Heathrow. I didn't know the paper circulated

here from that distance? Her: By bus. Me: But the service is terrible. Her: I'll try to manage. Try to? Thar's not much help to me.

This is depressing. I've had 33 calls. Not one raises a flicker of a right feeling in me. Most of them seem barely able to cope with their own lives, let alone anyone else's.

Then, at last! A candidate I feel confidence in. Mrs Harris, 50, bustling, bright and friendly. Stacks of references. Good ones, too, from posh addresses on Rich-mond Hill. Mustn't jump the gun. I will wait 24 hours before making my decision. But just as I am about to lift the phone to give Mrs Harris the all-clear, another candidate esents herself.

Mrs Harris has to come from Kew. Mandy lives just round the

corner. I'd worry about Mrs H getting home at nights.

2. Mrs H can cook, but rather oldfashioned, ie lots of bangers and beans. Mandy's mentioned taglia-telle and stuffed peppers. 3. Mrs H has good references.

Mandy has references. 4. Mrs H didn't actually say anything about doing housewori; whereas Mandy volunteered "if you get in a jam". Young people do have a more, well, flexible spirit, 5. Mrs H turned up five minutes early for her interview. Mandy an hour late,

Mrs H has the experience. But isn't there some advantage for practically pubescent girls in having someone like a mate to confide in and talk fashion to?

7. Mrs H is nearly 60. Mandy is 19. blonde, blue-eyed and has a Brigitte Bardot pout. A tough decision? Who am I

PETER DAVIES

There's no escape, just play the game

Be it charades or

the vicar's cat games come into

their own at

Jill Parkin

here's something odd about the British Christmas. During the breaks between eating, we're often stuck in a room with several people we haven't seen for 364 days. We must have stacks to talk about. What do we do? We start playing games madly, thus avoiding any real conversa-

tion for another year. I married into a family of games players, a shock for someone brought up with only an incomplete set of Kan-U-Go cards. (Mind you, it made me into a passable Scrabble player, which came in handy during those long dark evenings of courting.)

I am notorious among my in-laws for having to have Snap explained to me twice. So when I came back home one Christmas from a four-day assignment in post-revolutionary Romania, their annual orgy had quite slipped my mind. All I wanted was a gin. and a loving hand to help me out of the waxed tacket 1'd been all but sleeping in. But dly ever drink, and their hands are usually folding bits of paper. It was "Hi; Jill!" and back to their substitute for real social intercourse. So I went, via Belgrade and the family flour game, smoothly from Ceausescu to murder in the

dark. Not much difference. But like the Boxing Day walk and the pounds of muts you wouldn't dream of buying normally, games - board games, word games, movingabout-the-room games - are an inevitable part of Christmas. You can't escape. There are people out there, and in the sitting room with you, who

plan this months ahead. A friend of mine, a radio news editor, cuts out headlines all year round, just for her new year party game. She actually practises the flour game the day before her family do. She turns the flour out of a bowl and stands in her kitchen, carefully cutting slices off the flour dome without letting the chocolate topple off.

Christmas, says

Board games, word games and moving about the room games — they are an inevitable part of a British Christmas. There will be people in the sitting room with you who planned this ritual months ahead

You never know if the games your family plays are normal. Everyone plays charades and consequences. But what about up-Jenkins, and the vicar's cat? Mine only by

marriage, you understand. Those oldies who are always telling us "in my day we used to make our own entertainment" should get down and play up-Jenkins. Real DIY fun, that is. It makes flicking the remote seem like an intellectual challenge.

Still, a young games-hating Cambridge don I met at a wedding admitted: "You can have a good subversive time with that word game where you have to guess which is the right meaning. I once did mooli, and gave them the choice between a rudely shaped vegetable, a Hindu word for the female sex organ as an object of veneration, and the Irish festival of the cow. They all went for the sex organ. I think that tells you a lot about how repressed games players are. A lot of them are people who went to children's parties and never got the parcel. Winning matters so much to them that even games of complete chance or laughable skill can become a triumph to them."

ne has to be charitable to the games players, then. This is their one chance to shine. Anyway they've got us, and plenty of pencils and paper to go round.

So we might as well find the gin and begin. "The vicar's cat

is an aberrant cat . . * Everything from the Queen's speechto the salmonella in the turkey is combining to make us comatose over Christmas. Something to wake us up is no bad thing. Let's play up and play their blessed games for one day in 365. After all, if you had that much to talk about, you'd see each other more often. wouldn't you?

S ome advice from an old party book: "Let some of the games be noisy ones, some of them atrociously silly, and it will be just as well if you get to know a few that are sedate."

ATROCIOUSLY SILLY GAMES

Here are some games that would not come amiss at a Fawlty Towers party. Flour Game. Tightly pack flour in a bowl and num out on to a plate, placing a chocolate on top. Players take it in turns to slice a piece of the flour mountain away without letting it collapse. The loser gets their face pushed into the flour - and the chocolate by way of compensation.

■ The Vicar's Cat. A round-the-room game. Everyone has to find an adjective to fit the feline. You start with "a" ("The vicar's car is an artful cat .. angry cat ... absent-minded cat" and so on), proceeding through the alphabet to "z". It's obviously more difficult if you're the last to go, so the starting point moves on a person with each letter. If you can't think of a new

word vou're out. Up-Jenkins. A find-the-coin game for two teams facing each other across a table. A coin is passed about by one

FUN AND GAMES FOR ALL THE FAMILY

team under the table and is finally concealed in one player's hand. The other team gives orders, trying to hear or see the coin. "Up-Jenkins" means the coin team must raise their hands at 90 degrees to the table with fingertips resting on it. "Smash" means bring your palms down with a bang. Hands are eliminated until the opposing team chooses one and all the players see whether it's the right one.

Here is another silly game, adapted from my ancient book, Games for your

Party, by Bernard Stanley. In Who Are You? the organiser pins a well-known name on the back of each guest. You then move around the room asking questions of each other to find out who you are. Nothing too direct. Not "Am I the Duchess of York?" but "Do I bank with Hello! magazine?" After a while the organiser calls each name and you find out if whether you have guessed right. As Mr Stanley says: "You must exercise discretion in the names you foist on your friends or your friends may become your foes."

Needles is a sexist but funny game

involving male and female pairs. Needles, thread, buttons and small pieces of fabric are laid out on a table at the end of the room. The women have to run and get the items; the men have to thread the needle and sew on the button; the women have to run back with the sewing. First button on wins.

SEDATE GAMES

Most board games are for small numbers of players. Here are a few for a reasonable-sized party, which already has Monopoly and Trivial Pursuit. ■ The Manager claims to be the first ever fantasy football board game for up to six players, who are cast as managers of Premiership football clubs. They play with Banco de

The winner is the one with the most cash at the end (£19.99, Waddingtons). Hazard features Chaucer's pilgrims and the idea is to be the first to get around the board from medieval Southwark to Canterbury. Up to six

can play and you learn about the

Venables currency (Tel himself created

the game), buying and selling players.

Canterbury Tales as you go. Minimum age seven (£15.95, Past Times).

NOISY GAMES

■ Poison Spot. You need space and not much furniture. Everyone stands in a ring hand in hand, music is turned on and the ring careers around. Two handkerchiefs are spread on the floor and anyone touching one is out. You're allowed to nudge other people on to the poison spots. As numbers thin out more spots are added. In the case of aggressive play, stop the music and everyone must stand still.

If you want something more modern, Waterstones suggests: A Book of Surrealist Games by Alastair Brotchic (Shambhala, £7.99) for language and alternative card games; The Penguin Book of Games by Sarah Toynbee (£4.99), with more than 100 games for grown-ups; The Big Family Games Book by Jane Molineaux (Michael O'Mara, £12.99), six family games and pieces; The Mammoth Book of Word Games by Peter Newby (Robinson Publishing, £5.99), games from ciphertext to word squares.

Ruth Gledhill on a celebrity Christmas carol service that had a serious message behind the fun and laughter

Why Wally made it the best Christmas ever



SURPRISING numbers of young people among the elderly and blind, some with Harrods shopping bags and others with friendly guide dogs, squeezed between the

pews or, in the case of one particularly large, hairy alsatian, flowed over into the aisle, for our celebrity Christmas carol service in the heart of the City of London. An enormous, sparkling Christmas tree dominated the front of the church, and it began to feel as though Christmas had truly begun as the choir processed up the aisle, robed choirgirls patting the eager alsatian as they clambered over it to reach their seats on the stage, singing throughout.

The Anglican clergyman taking the service. Dr Michael Peel, opened with a bidding prayer: "My friends, as we prepare ourselves to hear the message of angels, so let us go in heart and mind to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass and the babe lying in a manger."

We were in the City Temple, the only continuing Free Church within the City, and with a history dating to the 1600s. Its ministers have included Thomas Goodwin, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell and, besides its regular congregation, it is home to the Christian Life Bible College. For our carol service, various stars of radio, television and the verses from Isaiah.



Jenny Seagrove, Clive Anderson and Honor Blackman read prayers

stage had volunteered to do the readings to benefit the charities Help the Aged and Action for Blind People. Our first reading was by Clive Anderson, the chat-show host, a man blessed with the rare power to generate laughter, no matter what he says. I only just controlled the urge to giggle uncontrollably as he launched into two rather serious

The next reading, by the actress Jenny Seagrove, calmed us down and Honor Blackman personified the spirit of Christmases Past as she read from Norman Longmate's How We Lived Then, with his tale of the Sheffield girl in the Second World War, who wrote to Santa Claus for "any little thing you can spare", or the Surrey girl who left instructions for Santa Claus on the

AT YOUR SERVICE

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MINISTER: The Rev Dr David Hilborn ARCHITECTURE: Although built in 1958 after its predecessor on the site was bombed in 1941, this church feels much older. Its vast and stunning Interior gives a Godly impression of austere magnificence. ***

MUSIC: Admirable descants from London university's church choir, who sang popular carols in between most of the readings. ***

LITURGY: Time-honoured Christmas format of nine lessons and carols. *** SPIRITUAL HIGH: Joyful and triumphant. ***

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Sandwiches, quiches and hot mince pies, washed down with alcohol-free mulled fruit juice.

living room table, directing him to the bomb shelter in the cellar where she was sleeping on Christmas Eve. After that, Frank Windsor of Z-Cars fame shot straight from the hip with Matthew chapter one, his voice resounding through the temple. All the readings were followed by music or a carol and our treat this time was O Little Town of Bethlehem by the blind guitarist David James. Nerys

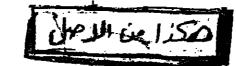
Hughes talked us gently through Luke chapter two, and then it was back to Mr Anderson for Dina Donohue's Trouble at the Inn, a story which, fortunately, was this time meant to be funny.

Anderson described a nativity play, where the part of the innkeeper was played by a man called Wally. who would today be classed as suffering from a "learning disability". When the time came to turn Mary and Joseph away, he could not remember his lines. The prompter urged him to turn the Holy family away but he just stood there, his mouth open, eyes filling with tears, staring at Mary. Finally, he cried out: "Don't go, Joseph. Bring Mary back. You can have my room." As Mr Anderson explained, some people in the town thought the play had been ruined. Others, however, considered Wally had made it the best Christmas the town

had ever seen. Dr Peel went on to lead us in orayer: "May the humility of the shepherds, the perseverence of the wise men, the joy of the angels and the peace of the Christ-child be God's gift to you this Christmas time." He blessed us all before sending us into a night where the shops had finally closed and the true spirit of Christmas began to be felt in the present.

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The garden from under the sea



Orchids and cowslips at Folkestone

Chalk spoil from

the Channel Tunnel

has become a

naturalist's delight

amphire Hoe is one Eurotunnel asset that must bring undiluted joy to the company's accountants. Ecologically, it is all profit about 6.5 million cubic yards of chalk marl, the spoil from the English half of the Channel Tunnel excavations, sown with wild-

Planting on the 185-acre site at Dover includes rock samphire seeded from descendants of the plants growing on adjacent cliffs which a botanically correct Shakespeare in-

Act IV. Scene VI. Stage directions: The country near Dover.

Edgar (to Gloster): The crows and choughs that wing the midway air

Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down

Hangs one that gathers samphire...

The chalk spoil has been contoured to mimic the form of nearby Folke-stone Warren. Although it has not seen the sun for millions of years. naturalists expect this most virginal of seed bases in time to support many of the traditional plant species of chalk downland, the dominant habi-

Botanists are delighted with last summer's yield. The hoe already supports bird's-foot trefoil, pink sainfoin and yellow kidney vetch, some of the distinct flora in landscape form virtually wiped off the face of Britain by postwar agricultural changes. More than 70 per cent of chalk down-

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Above the White Cliffs of Dover, a new 185-acre downland site called Samphire Hoe has been created from the Channel Tunnel diggings

land has been lost to agriculture in the past 50 years, and much of the rest is under threat through lack of

Samphire Hoe is the boldest of the attempts at habitat creation by the White Cliffs Countryside Project, a joint initiative to improve one of the most conspicuous, and most transited, landscapes in Britain. (It includes the White Cliffs of Dover and, increasingly many people's first and last view of England. Cherry Garden Hill, that sweep of cattle-dotted scarp above the entrance to the tunnel.)

The White Cliffs Countryside Project, launched in 1989 in the early days of the Channel Tunnel construction, is one of the most potent environmental alliances of its type in Britain. Funding partners include Eurotunnel, which owns large areas around the tunnel mouth, Railtrack, the Countryside Commission. Kent. Shepway and Dover councils, the Kent Wildlife Trust and landowners.

The project manages three large areas of chalk downland: the Western Heights above the White Cliffs of

LIP& OCUS.

Dover, Folkestone Warren, and Folkestone Downs, which runs serenely above the bewildering matrix of railway lines, roads, overbridges and gantries of the tunnel terminal.

The scheme has already scored some notable successes in restoring areas of downland which had become overgrown, but at least were never ploughed, seeded or treated with chemicals and fertiliser and turned over to intensive agriculture.

Because of the lack of traditional management, much of this land was derelict, rank and coarse, invaded with scrub," says the project officer, Nick Johannsen. "There were problems of fly-tipping and litter. Without intervention, a huge area of species-rich grassland would have been lost." In all, project workers have cleared

about 700 acres of ancient chalk grassland of scrub. The chief agent of repair is cattle. "We have been grazing some downs for seven years and have seen spectacular improvement," Mr Johannsen says. Downs which were knee-high in coarse grass have been transformed to a fine turf,

with many dormant species growing again, such as cowslips, harebells and orchids, in turn supporting up to 30 species of butterfly.

The land is being grazed by animals belonging to farmers who receive payments to underwrite what would otherwise be loss-making farming activities under the Government's Countryside Stewardship scheme. (A condition of the scheme is public access to the downs and, reflecting the project's cross-Channel links, signs and leaflets are bilingual.)

An indicator of success is the Adonis Blue butterfly, which needs closely grazed turf. It has staged a sensational comeback. Once it was common on the downs - there are records of Victorian lepidopterists brushing up clouds of the butterflies on the tops. "Ten years ago, they were here in dozens; now it's up to hundreds. I look forward to thousands." Mr Johannsen savs.

As well as creating new and rescuing old downland, the project is recreating the habitat on about 43 acres of land which has been turned over to arable farming. Round Hill, part of Eurotunnel's large estate just above the first section of the tunnel has been weared off its agri-chemical addiction and sown with kidney yetch. upright broom and oxeye daisy.

Initial results are encouraging, though Mr Johannsen says that the restoration process will be slow on such sites. "Plants are spreading in from adjoining downland, but there may still only be 20 to 30 species, compared to several hundred on the down that was never ploughed.

The process is not fully understood. We are still learning, and however much money we spend, we cannot recreate the intricacy of the flora on the ancient downs.

GARETH HUW DAVIES

• Samphire Hoe is not yet open to the public, though guided walks have been arranged. The next is on Dec 29, 2pm. White Cliffs Countryside Project. 6 Cambridge Terrace, Dover, Kent CT16 UT (01304 241806).

FEATHER REPORT

Partridge myth is off its perch

THE "true-love's" present for the first day of Christmas in the song is the rarest of all his or her 12 gifts. Drummers drum, geese lay and lords leap - but partridges never settle in pear trees. In fact, they hardly ever perch in trees at all. They may occasionally land on a fence, but essentially they are ground birds.

They even prefer to run away rather than fly when they are frightened, though if they do whire up into the air they fly very well, coasting over hedges and dodging bales of straw until they settle on the earth again.

There are two species out in the fields of Britain: the common or grey partridge and the red-legged partridge or "Frenchman", an introduced species. The latter is now probably more common, but the old British partridge is still plentiful. When one puts its head up above the corn or long grass to look around, it can instantly be identified by its

bright orange face.

Most of the grey partridges
never go far from the farmland where they began life, so there are probably families of them that go back into the mists of time. In the winter, they move around in flocks or "coveys". You can hear their call a long way off — a sound like metal being scraped. If you follow it up you can usually find several of them

lurking by a hedge.

An attractive habit of these winter coveys is the way they

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foxes, when there is no corn to hide in, so they squat down at dusk in a circle — perhaps 12 or 15 birds — all facing outwards. That way they have a better chance of detecting an enemy approaching.

Not many people have seen these night circles, but sometimes one can find a ring of their droppings showing where they have been.

On windy nights they are less likely to roost in this way, because they prefer to face into a strong wind, like most roosting birds. That keeps their feathers unruffled - and it is their feathers that keep

PARTRIDGES start pairing in late January or February. It is a fine public spectacle. You hear their metallic calls and find 20 or 30 of them out together in an open field probably two or three coveys joining up. They run about in front of each other, chase and fight, and take little notice of a discreet observer.

Then they start leaving the field in couples. Love and spring are on their way.

DERWENT MAY

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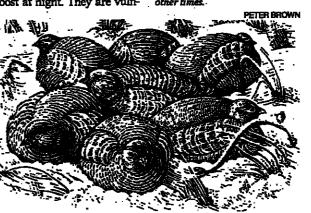
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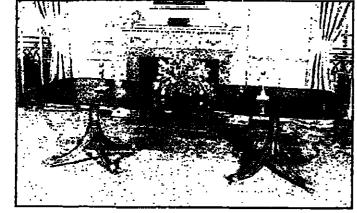
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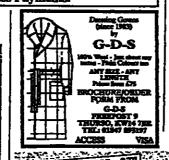
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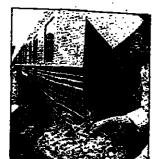
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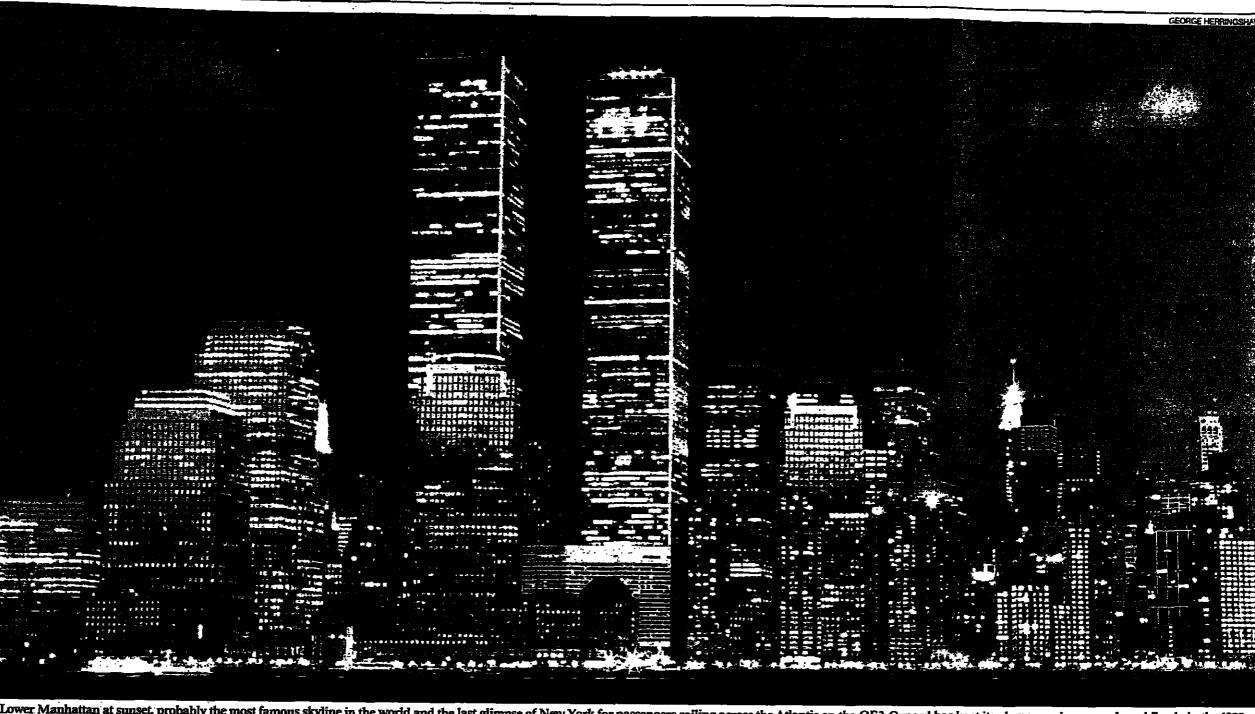


Luxury route to Oriental pleasures **S.E. Asia** - 15

trave

Coconuts for the club-class castaways Fiji - 16





Lower Manhattan at sunset, probably the most famous skyline in the world and the last glimpse of New York for passengers sailing across the Atlantic on the QE2; Cunard has kept its glamorous image anchored firmly in the 1930s

A dance with Dad to the music of time

hile the Manhattan skyline shrank into the pale September sky. Dad was playing golf. I watched his club arcing through the green cage beyond the. lifeboats. Twenty-five years ago I worked as his caddy for half-acrown (12½p).

I had brought my father with me on a short assignment - two days in New York then back on the QE2. It was a treat I wanted to give him; he deserved it, and as a self-employed building contractor he could easily have time off. "Why do you want to take me?" he had blurted out in delight when I surprised him with the tickets. It was the first time we had spent

more than two days together since I

lives. "Alone?" We were joined on the QE2 by 1,000 crew members and 800 other passengers. In every corner of the ship a lurking Cunard employee inquired after our health, offered us food or took our photograph in soft focus - sometimes all three at once.

was a teenager, and the first time

we had been alone for a week in our

The inconvenient absence of scenery is an occupational hazard of cruising across the Atlantic. To make up for it. Cunard goes overboard, so to speak, on the entertainment: lectures, quiz shows, bingo, films, shops, tabletennis championships, church and synagogue services, talent shows, aerobics classes, scrabble contests and meetings of the Masonic Two views of the First Lady of the sea - a daughter treating her foxtrotting father to a trip, and a wide-eyed first-timer

brethren. It even has the nerve to include a weight-control seminar. Dressing up, sipping cocktails and whirling round the dance floor are de rigueur and "gentlemen hosts" are employed to foxtrot with single

women passengers.
In the face of change throughout the leisure sector, Cunard has kept its Noël Coward-and-Royalty image anchored in the 1930s. "It's like arriving in little old England as soon as you step off the pier in New York," a retired attorney from Kansas told me as I trod on his foot

Dad and I shared a cabin. It was very comfortable, though it did remind me why I had left home. In 1842 Dickens and his wife shared a cabin during a transatlantic crossing on Cunard's Britannia, and he wrote in his diary: "It is as close to hell as I can imagine." It took 14 days then, and milk was provided by a cow on deck. She was stowed in a hammock as it was the only

way they could keep her upright. What I liked best on the QE2 was lying on the sundeck and letting the steward wrap me in a navy serge blanket like a horse. Like all his colleagues, this youth wore a badge bearing his name. And like us, David came from Bristol. The sundeck under his aegis had the whiff of a resort out of season, lumpy shapes covered in green tarpaulins stowed along the edges

Most of the time Dad lay next to me on the sundeck and David ministered to us with tea and crustless ham sandwiches. Many hours unravelled as Dad and David discussed Bristol City FC, the pair of them expressing such vehement rebuttals of the manag-

of the smooth, grey boards.

er's selection that I wondered why they did not ring him up on the satellite phone to tell him where he was going wrong.

Bad weather eventually drove us off the sundeck. On the third evening - half-way - crēpes suzettes had to be removed from the dinner menu. "Too much swell for a naked flame." our waiter said.

Stormy seas, coupled with the irritating absence of scenery, meant we were ineluctably drawn to the on-board human landscape. Most of the other passengers were American, their faces mulberried by drink and their minds blanched by the eternal peace of Kansas. They smiled at us benignly, the happy image of parent and child.

There were things I had planned

to say to Dad in the leisurely moments of our cruise but, of course, I did not.

I am glad we shared the experience. People usually write things about their fathers after they have lost them, and the literature recites a litany of regret — for things un-said, debts unpaid, love constrained. There is never enough time in the endless cycle of parenthood.

Watching Dad capering around the dance floor of the QE2 as if he were a teenager, I wondered if this was the first stage in the inevitable reversal of roles as children become parents and parents come to depend on them.

Sara Wheeler The author was a guest of Cunard.

QE2 FACT FILE

Cunard (01703 716500) can arrange flights from the UK, three nights in a hotel in New York

(room only, per person

sharing) and a 6-night

return trip on the QE2

(including all meals and

on-board entertainment

■ The Travel Bookshop

NYC Restaurants and

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Millau, £9, ISBN 1881

06620 7). City Guide

New York by Vanessa

Letts (Cadogan, £10.99, ISBN 0 947754 46 6).

to Southampton

from £995.

(0171-229 5260) recommends: Gayot's

Caviar or turtle soup? I think I'll have both

the QE2's maiden voyage in 1967 was described by some British commentators as even more exciting than the Apollo space rocket lift-off. Standing on the bridge hundreds of miles from land, surrounded by the unforgiving Atlantic, I could understand the exagger-

Despite running aground in 1995, and much publicised problems with exploding lavatories on the 1994 world cruise, the ageing First Lady of the sea retains a unique aura of glamour.

The elegant liner makes the slow trip from Southampton to New York up to 24 times a year. It may take five days as opposed to a mere eight hours in a jet. But no view from an aeroplane, 35,000ft above the waves, matches the magic of that first glimpse of the ap-proaching Manhattan skyline from the cabin porthole.

Hundreds of passengers rushed on deck at 6am to watch the Statue of Liberty. Ellis Island, the Staten Island ferry and the United Nations building slip past in slow motion.

Down below, hundreds more passengers were fast asleep in their cabins. Presumably they were the ones who have made the trip two or three times a year for the past 20 years. The ship is addictive.

When I walked up the gangway in Southampton five days earlier I had felt like the 14-year-old boy in 1975 who boarded a plane for the first time with his parents when Spanish package holidays were a new phenomenon.

However, my excitement was nothing compared with such confidence that the in-

the breathless reaction of the American holidaymakers m their vast floral shirts, jostling to be first on board and posing for photographs with anyone who was wearing a uniform.

I fought, with limited suc-cess, with the floral shirts, weighed down by cine equip-ment which would have put a BBC outside broadcast crew to shame, for a bird's-eye view on deck to watch land disappear. A flotilla of small boats

escorted us out to sea, their whistles blasting; proud to be in the same wake as Cunard's

Stepping inside was like going back to an era long before package holidays and supersonic flights. The decor is more Dickens than Conran. Thick velvet drapes, deep carpets, and dozens of rarely seen portraits of a young Queen Elizabeth. Few pictures remain of her daughters in law.

Cunard has attracted a more diverse age group on board. Shampoos and sets are no longer the most soughtafter service in the hairdressing salon. The average age of a passenger is below 58. In the ballroom, competition is still intense among wealthy widows for the favours of eligible

male dancing partners. But the golden oldies aerobics class remains one of the most popular organised activities. There were lectures. videos, an enormous library, magic shows for the children. sponge painting and a talk on ivor Novello. Max Bygraves, 74, who topped the entertainment bill, was a big success. And yes, he sang: "You need

This is a liner which exudes

mentary on the sinking of the Titanic

Stress is non-existent. The only ordeals, having dressed for dinner, is the exhaustive round of cocktail parties, which are a hotbed of ship gossip. Invitations are highly prized for champagne in Cap-tain Ronald Warwick's board-

The toughest choice of the week is at the dining table. Russian caviar or turtle soup as a starter? Here you can have both. There is something almost decadent about dining under huge windows over-looking the battleship-grey Atlantic, the gloom only occasionally illuminated by the far-off lights of a passing

7 hite-coated and goldbraided waiters hover discreetly around the dining table. Leatherbound menus are perched between seemingly endless rows of silver cutlery and crystal glass. In the strict caste system, the Queen's Grill is for the elite. I was in the Grill, second class by comparison, but it still felt like the Ritz.

Dining can be hazardous. One English couple protested to their maitre d' about the monosyllabic German couple sitting opposite at breakfast. They were too late. The Germans had launched a pre-emptive strike, complained and changed their table first.

Meals run endlessly into each other with afternoon tea and cakes served each day. Cucumber and salmon sandwiches were popular with the Americans. After two cocktail parties and a sumptous ban-

quet, a floor show and a brief but unprofitable spell in the casino, it is to the Chart Room for a nightcap. Or maybe to the Yacht Club, which appears to go on all night. Some people are having a midnight swim.

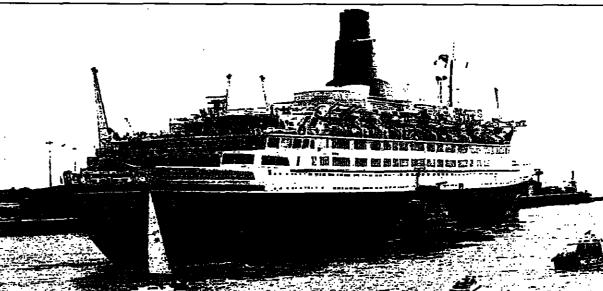
Others are ambling on deck. Exercise can consist of a daily trip around the shopping mall, by taking the plunge in one of three swimming pools, or by jogging round the deck. The latter has to be negotiated with care. The ship is 13 decks high and about 320 yards

Iong.
The Atlantic passed by in a blur of black tie and cocktail dresses, and impeccable service with 33lb of caviar, a thousand bottles of champagne and 500lb of strawberries all disappearing on the

The first glimpse of New York might have been exciting. But the most memorable part of the trip was now over. ANDREW PIERCE

■ The author travelled

courtesy of Cunard.



Despite problems at the start of her 1994 world cruise, the ageing QE2 retains an aura of glamour and grandeur

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Golden road to Samarkand

The hotel manager smiled pruriently. wagged her finger and declared: "You are not married." We were in her Office for the Foreigners, a bizarre blend of Soviet rococo, and having been caught trying to check in now faced this moment of truth. "You need my permission": she spoke with relish. Passports were pawed, visas studied and the how long, what, when and where of our stay mulled over until, finally, an obliging welcoming smile.

Such are the baffling ways of Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan. To visit this country is to peel back the layers of an onion of perplexing shape and pungency. Nominally Islamic, steadfastly communist in all but name, it knows with pride it is the soul of Central Asiand is slowly trying to forge a new identity. Meanwhile, dollars will do nicely.

And hence the debate over matrimony. The moral high ground of two singles earns more than one double and it's not only tourist apparatchiks who are in the know. Just Uzbekistan, the soul of central Asia,

will startle

the unwary

outside the foyer and at almost all hours of the day, a posse of older people were touting cutprice rooms in their homes. This nascent capitalism is just one strand in the unravelling

of Central Asia.

In town, workers at the Kukeldash Madrasa, the Islamic school, welcomed us in a courtyard lined with small rooms. Sprawled on diwans behind the main portico, they poured us green tea and we regarded one another with shameless curiosity. Tourists being thin on the ground, they wanted news and views.

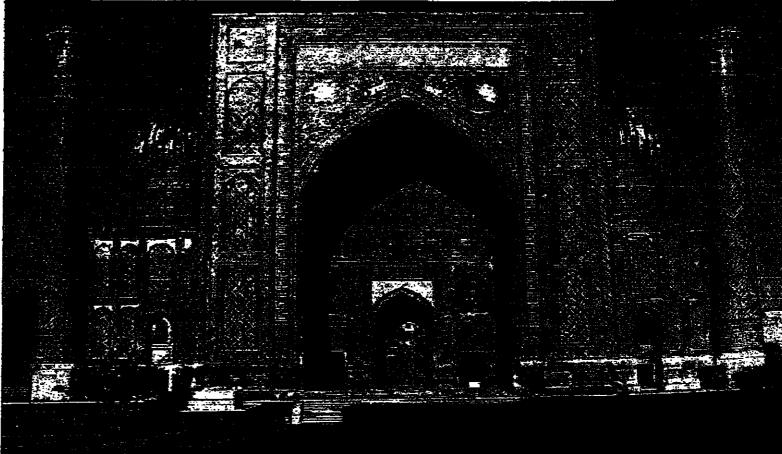
A youth translated. What did I think of Mike Tyson? News of the great one's conversion to Islam had penetrated even here. Only tact

prevented an honest answer.
"We are not Iran," said one
man later, others nodding in
agreement, "and we don't
want to be like them."

Tashkent is full of surprises. There are Snickers, Mars Bars and Uzbek champagne at £2 a bottle. Prostitutes are so sleek and discreet it would be harsh to call them whores. There are trams and a metro with themed, stylised stations; the roads are smooth, wide and shady with trees. It is the oddest bit of west in the east. "Native drums", heard by master-spy Sir Fitzroy Maclean in the 1930s, which "throbbed rhythmically in the warm Eastern-smelling darkness", are elusive.

But there is opera — at the Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet Theatre, a neo-classical Stalinist mishmash. At 50p a ticket, it hosts the cheapest opera anywhere yet audiences are pitiful, as much an indication of changing mores as the number of Russians returning to the motherland.

We headed west on the Golden Road to Samarkand. Its monuments to empire



Registan Square in Samarkand is Uzbekistan's Taj Mahal, a spectacular ensemble of minarets from the early 1400s to the mid-17th century

building and vanity have left many a writer struggling to evoke the dazding patterns of blue, green, yellow and turquoise glaze shimmering on domes, minarets and arched façades. Registan Square is

the country's Taj Mahal, a spectacular ensemble of minarets from the early 1400s to the mid-17th century and on a drop-jaw scale. There is mosaic everywhere, endless motifs that even break Islam's prohi-

bition on depicting living things. So far it has survived conflict, neglect, scavengers and earthquakes. Rather than endure communism, it was tended and restored. But the risours of independence may

prove to be another acid test. The Registan is but a postscript to the reign of mighty Tamerlane who almost conquered half the world and held most of it in fear. He made Samarkand his capital and his tomb, retrieved from the clutches of collapse, stands in a revitalised compound. Beneath its ribbed dome lie six

For another small "fee", a nervous guard took us down to the crypt to steal a glimpse at the real thing by the dim glow of bulbs. Not had for the killer of 17 million people.

cenotaphs, a cracked green

one to the man himself.

The real centre of infamy, though, on a smaller more lucid scale was Bukhara. Once called "the Noble", described as "one of the dirtiest and most unhealthy places in Asia". At our Bukhara hotel, the receptionist saw I was British, smiled and drawing his finger under his neck said something like "Stot" and "Coley" — a reference to Stoddart and Conolly, the 19th century British Army officers.

At the height of the "Great

At the height of the "Great Came" when Britain and Russia were jostling for power, influence and ultimately the security of India, Stoddart had come as political agent. Faced with a tyrannical Emir and illversed in the opaqueness of Central Asian etiquette and diplomacy, he managed to offend rather than befriend. Conolly the rescuer was wrongfooted too, and after months in jail the pair were executed in the square before the citadel.

We sat in the square and munched through shashlyk, grilled skewered mutton, and fresh lepeshka, a flat unleavened bread washed down with steaming tea. Traffic was slight and we wondered where everyone was. This odd emptiness, akin to an old Awengers episode, seemed with few exceptions endemic to Bukhara.

Walking to the city's historic core, it was hard to credit an old proverb "as wide awake as a broker of Bukhara". Hundreds of years ago it was a wealthy, thriving caravan town bridging China and west Asia. Now I saw a struggling market where from tables people peddled Turkish chocolates, detergents and vodka, the goods of the moment.

If Bukhara was a byword for the nobility of Islam, then remote Khiva was that of duplicity and treachery. The West's first serious approach was dispatched by Peter the Great in 1717. His envoy and 4,000 men were warmly welcomed, split up supposedly for

comfort, and then murdered. It was another 156 years before the last khanate succumbed to the grip of Russia.

From Rukhara it's an eight-

From Bukhara it's an eighthour bus trip through the Kizyl-Kum desert. Towns cursed with spidery gantries and cranes loomed out of the dusk and disappeared into darkness; the lands which government forgot. Under a brilliant moon we crossed the sheeny River Oxus, that most unknown of rivers.

As we arrived, swarmed around and a friendly mob hemmed us in. Olya, a dered if we might like to share hers. Once in we succumbed to the arms of hospitality as she brought us home to sister Sonya; grand, old and tur-baned. With hearts of gold they feted us for two days with all the food Uzbek restaurants have never known. Resting on a carpeted diwan in their trellised courtyard, we watched Sonya knock back a vodka and listened to Olya explain her rag trade business trips to Delhi.

hiva is something of a museum, the most intact of any Silk Route oasis city, still surrounded by high clay walls and gates, packed with mausolea, minarets and one glorious palace. We entered through the west gate and a man I took to be a guide approached. Sensing my levity, he anwanted to see our "papers".
Such an old-fashioned word, I thought, redolent of Buchan and espionage and quite enough to ensure our undivided attention.

Leaving behind gaggles of local tourists and a motley crew of hawkers, we wandered through the near-deserted historic heart of Khiva. Each corner of its narrow streets evokes forgotten lives, hopes and miseries. Little of it is more than 200 years old but all reeks of antiquity.

At the Tash Khauli Palace

At the Tash Khauli Palace we saw the most vintage morsel of Central Asian mien. At a mausoleum dedicated to a l-tih century poet, wrestler and doctor, a veiled woman was paying her respects. The veil was unusual enough. But in leaving she retreated facing the tomb and murmuring prayers. Other women looked on in amazement and even embarrassment. Uzbekistan the onion had been peeled, cut and quartered. I was enthralled but only a little wiser.

AMAR GROVER



UZBEKISTAN FACT FILE

■ Steppes East (0)285 810267) offers a ten-day Treasures of Uzbekistan tour from £1,415; Ezodus (0)81-675 5550) has a 15-day Samarkand and the Silk Road tour at £1,395; and Regent Holidays (0)17-921 1711) can arrange personalised itineraries from about £1,200 for two weeks. All tours include return flights from London.

Inguis from London.

Group lourists with pre-booked accommodation are preferred. Independent travel is possible but getting a visa may be awkward. The Embassy of Uzbekistan (0171-229 7679) is at 421 Holland Park, London Wil ZRP. The Uzbekistan Tourist Office (0171-935 1899) at 13 Marylebone Lane, London Wil SFE can also arrange visits.

Flights start at £525 return with Turkish Airlines (Condor

Travel, 0171-373 8477.1 Uzbekistan Airways (67-72 Wigmore St. London WI, 0171-935 4775) has direct flights to Tashkent from £575. Fares may increase from March 25 next year.

Travel within the country is economical and reasonably efficient. Hotels usually charge westerners at least triple the local room rate and many could do with refurbishment.

Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: Traveller's Companion to Central Asia by Kathleen Hopkirk (John Murray, £12.99. ISBN 0 71955 321 0). Goodnight, Mr Lenin by Tiziano Terzani (Picador, £5.99, ISBN 0 33032 962 6).

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15/21

SE Asia: Graham Lord is pampered from head to toe at the Oriental Hotel and takes a luxury route to the high life

Live like a king but still be walked over

or 15 years the surprisingly English 120-year-old Orien-tal Hotel in Bangkok has been voted the best hotel in the world. The rich and famous will stay nowhere else and the hotel has won so many trophies and awards that it has a spotlit alcove for them near its glittering arcade of exclu-

But how can any one hotel be the best in the world? I arrived determined to be sceptical, to find fault wherever I could, but you cannot fail to be charmed from the moment you arrive. They could be right. This is the best hotel in the world. By the fountains in the lobby a pretty, pink-uniformed Thai girl welcomed me in from the sweltering heat of Bangkok with a fragrant jasmine garland, a traditional Thai salute and a glorious smile. A messenger delivered me to the reception desk. A receptionist took me without any delay to my thirdfloor suite. She even filled in my arrival card for me.

The split-level suite was spacious and airy, with silent air-conditioning, a crystal chandelier, fresh flowers and stunning views across the busy Chao Phraya river with its palms, ferns, sampans, ferries and river buses. There were fresh flowers even in the bathroom, along with a huge array of every tolletry you could possibly need. The butler arrived in 45 seconds

with a glass of chilled orange juice decorated with three purple orchids and asked if there was anything I needed. More orchid petals floated in the fingerbowl beside the plate of fruit and decorated the soap dishes in the bathroom.

And so it went on: they seem to have thought of everything, from the eight superb restaurants and the Thai cooking school to the gym, the spa, the business centre, the culture programme, the hotel's own

In my living room there was a hardback history of the hotel, a new magazines, a rack of postcards, a golden letter opener, a printed card saying in Thai "please drive me to the Oriental", and six sheets of gold-lettered hotel writing paper with my name in gold.

In the bedroom cupboard there was a torch, clothes brush, umbrella, four sizes of slipper and a longhandled shoe-horn for the fatter customer. In the minibar there was iced water and decent-sized bottles of spirits rather than miniatures. And the in-house TV movie channel was offering 28 films, from Carry on Cleo to Murder on the Orient Express. Even the electricity power-

points take British plugs. After a lunch of curried duck and plums I returned to my room to find a red rose and a bottle of Taittinger champagne in an ice bucket, with a handwritten welcome from the hotel's German Buddhist manager, 58-year-old

FACT FILE

■ Under the Winter Interlude programme (until Mar 31, 1997) rooms at the Oriental start at £190 a night for one or two people. The price includes breakfast, front and flowers on arrival, a complimentary bed for a child under 12 sharing the room with parents, use of the hotel's fitness facilities, and late

check-out up to 6pm. For reservations call 0800 962667. Many passenger arriving from or travelling to Singapore on the Eastern and Oriental Express train (from £890 per person) may also be entitled to one free night at the Oriental and one night at the Oriental Hotel in Singapore (reservations on 0171-805 5100).

Asiaworld Travel (01932) 820050) offers six nights at the Oriental, including return flights and transfers (room only). from £1,072 per person.

the river in the hotel ferry to enjoy a traditional one-hour Thai massage for £29 in a large private room in the Oriental's Spa Centre set in a lush, tranquil little garden and smelling deliciously of warm herbs. The young masseuse was so skilful that I fell asleep as she crawled up and down my spine on her knees. Afterwards I felt about 20 years old.

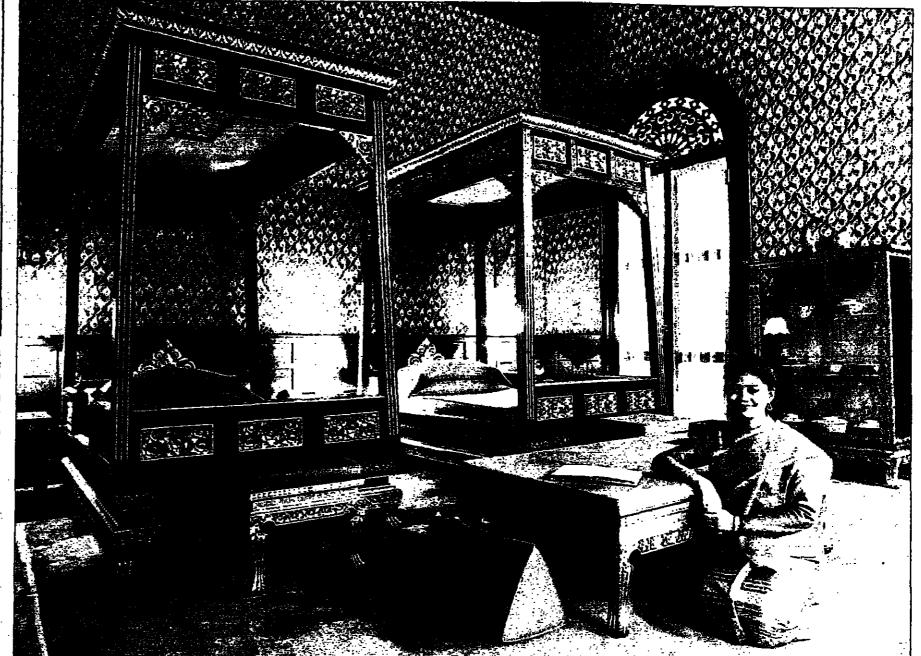
The £9 afternoon tea in the airy, ferry Authors' Lounge - with muffins, scones, Devonshire cloned cream, fruit cake and black-tie musicians playing the flute and guitar - could have been served at the London Ritz, and during early evening sundowners in the vast, elegant lobby the Oriental string quarter was playing Greensleeves. When I returned to my room there was a plate of savoury spring rolls garnished with a purple orchid, to go with the champagne.

inner that night - Japanese sushi in the Lord Jim restaurant as the pianist played As Time Goes By - was beautifully presented and delicious, even the studded octopus tentacles, even though I had never tried raw fish before.

Afterwards the cool, flowerdecked riverside terrace was a joy after the heat of the day, and Henrietta Robinson, the American jazz singer who kept us up until lam in the Bamboo Bar, was

When I finally crawled into bed I found, carefully laid out beside the bed, a linen napkin and hotel slippers. It was L30am and I did not know how to switch off the light reception a smiling member of staff arrived in moments.

In fact, every member of staff was always gracious and smiling.



The Somerset Maugham suite at the Oriental hotel has twin four-posters. Among the other suites named after authors is a pink one in honour of Barbara Cartland

afternoon corridor said she hoped 1 was having a nice day. And everywhere so many waiters were standing around that I know at last why they are called waiters.

Not everything would be to everyone's taste. I could have done without the nightly leaf-wrapped flower left on my pillow with quotations like this: "Golden slumbers kiss your eyes, smiles awake you when you rise."

I could also have done without the discovery that the Reading and that among all the plush fourposter, £522-a-night suites named after writers who have staved in the hotel - Conrad, Maugham, Cow-Even a cleaning woman in an ard, Greene, Wilbur Smith - there

is one in pink called the Barbara Cartland Suite.

Two Australian women guests also complained to me that they were unable to get an iron and board to press their clothes, which they preferred to do themselves. When I asked the manager about it he said: "If you have to think about spending three dollars to have a blouse pressed, you shouldn't be staying at the Oriental."

The only big flaw I could find in the hotel was my cramped 5ftstretch my legs in the bath, let alone lie down, and the shower head was so low that I had to bend down to wash my hair, the shower tended to turn suddenly hot or cold and the they expect. The Oriental is the

curtain was so inadequate that the floor was flooded each time. And I could hear my neighbour whenever he ran a tap or flushed the lavatory. "We are replacing all those bath-rooms next year," Wachtveil promised. In the end, however, the pluses far outweigh the rare minuses. This hotel is all they say it

is. The secret lies in the utter dedication of Mr Wachtveitl, who has been manager for 29 years, and his 1,300 staff - and his constant Buddhist search for perfection. "1

"but my mistress is the hotel". And his philosophy is devastatingly simple: Always give the customers just a little more than

modern answer to the 1920s Grand Hotel," says Wachtveitl. "I can't think of any other hotel where you can do everything under one roof. Thailand is noisy, organised chaos and this beautiful, charming, romantic hotel is a real oasis. The Oriental has a soul. Thai culture lends itself to hospitality. They have a rich spirituality. They welcome you into the hotel as they would into their own house. No other hotel has that. And we are very close to the staff: two-thirds of them years. They feel like a family. We have staff days, sports days, and send them all off now and then to a jungle monastery retreat where they sleep on the ground and eat

roots and ants. When they come back they're great friends. It's team work. We also listen carefully to our guests: if a suggestion comes up 20 times, then we do it." With its flowers, running water and music everywhere, the Oriental has the most wonderfully relaxed, oldfashioned blend of Thai and English serenity, a sense of style, elegance, fragrance and harmony with all the six senses.

And as Graham Greene wrote in letter which is framed in the "It remains a hotel where almost anything may happen and one may meet almost anybody from a mere author to an international crook on his way elsewhere."

Such an engaging journey for that perfect proposal

or two years Andreas Schwengeler, a Swiss railwayman, scrimped and saved, denied himself any unnecessary expenditure and refused to buy a car. This was so that one day he could take his Spanish girlfriend Beatriz Gonzalez on the world's most romantic train journey, the three-day, two-night, 1,207mile trip on the Eastern & Oriental Express from Singapore to Bangkok.

Mr Schwengeler was deter-mined to propose to Miss Gonzalez, a Zurich bank clerk. in the most romantic place he could imagine. And what could be a more romantic place for a railwayman than the most exotic line in the world on a train that was inspired by the 1932 Marlene film, Shanghai

in June 1996 they finally made the trip and Mr Schwengeler asked Christopher Byatt, the train's English manager, where would be the best place for him to

"I put champagne, two glasses and a bouquet of flowers in the library, and a garland of jasmine and roses on the Buddha. A small prayer was made to the Buddha," says Mr Byatt.

Then I asked a steward to tell the couple that I wished to see them both in the library mmediately. Schwengeler knew that was the code."

The stratagem worked. At 2.30pm - as Mr Byatt ensured the couple were not





Celebration: Beatriz Gonzalez and Andreas Schwengeler

disturbed after their lunch of curry soup, sea bream, lemon mousse and white wine in the Singapura dining car — Mr Schwengeler popped the question beneath the little Buddha statue as the train approached the border of Thailand. And Miss Gonzalez, of

course, said yes. It is a romantic story utterly typical of the E&O Express, surely the most stylish train running anywhere in the world. "We've travelled twice on the Orient Express in Europe, too," Mr Schwengeler told me later, "but the Orient

Express was never as beauti-

ful as this." He is right. With its art deco fittings, its Thai dancing girl. its Chinese pianist, the starlit open-air veranda observation car, the tasselled tangerine lampshades in the dining car and wood-panelled library, the E&O is as elegant as a 1930s film set. Boarding the Express just before midnight at Kuala Lumpur's old Moorish railway station, sipping champagne in the saloon car and listening to the black-tied pianist, felt like being transported back in time.

Nothing seems too much

trouble for Mr Byatt, who now lives in Bangkok, or for the other young Englishman who masterminds each journey of the E&O Express, Kevin Cape, the train's cockney executive chef. He once worked at the Connaught Hotel in London and then ran an hotel/restaurant in the Lake District, but he now lives in Singapore and for three years has been responsible for the train's superb

ike Mr Byatt, Mr Cape seems unfazed by crises and challenges. On one trip, he says, "the Thai Royal Family cancelled its booking but then at the last minute, just as we were about to leave Bangkok, one of the staff came running along the platform saying 'they're coming, they're coming — the Thai Royal Family. And they were. Wefed them but there wasn't a lot of choice.

"We've had crises on board, as well. The freezer broke down once and I had to phone ahead to get the sorbets in dry ice. And we've had to wash the plates in Perrier because someone forgot to fill the train with tap water. But I like

decisions you can change anything around. Just don't

Cooking gourmet food aboard a train as it clacketyclacks past the palm trees. paddy fields and water buffalo of the South-East Asian jungle is very different from doing it in England.

"You have to import all of it," Mr Cape says. "Cheese from France, beef from the US, salmon from Scotland. And the logistics of carrying it all on the train are difficult. I've got no ice cream on board, for instance, but if you said you wanted some for dinner tonight I could get it in about

"It's a tough life. Cooking on the train is cramped and the two kitchens are very small. Because of the restricted space you have to consider how much chopping and cutting a dish might take, and you have to contend with the movement of the train. The Malay chefs have to be taught to get a pot only half-full. You have to learn little tricks like that.

"But I love this job. The train's a beautiful product - a fantastic, classy, English product - and I have much more independence than I would have in an hotel. I could never go back to work in England. I'm too Asian now. I love Asia and the people — they're not so intense about the rat-race and I have a Filipina girlfriend

in Singapore. "I do miss London and I used to enjoy dining out there at places like the Connaught, which is my all-time favourite But the last time I went back I couldn't believe how miserable everyone looked. It's like everything's become totally

Mr Cape specialises in French food with a slight Asian flavour. "We don't serve Asian food as such because of the small size of the tables, and anyway a lot of people don't understand Asian food. We try to blend things. We do sushi



Train passengers bargain with traders at a typical country station in Thailand

for our Japanese passengers London, but I managed to and sushi with smoked fish for change all the flight tickets Westerners. Europeans like from the train by using my lamb but Asians don't they mobile telephone." think it's slightly sour, so we

However, his happiest paspoach it rather than roast it." sengers of all time have probably been Mr Schwengeler and his future bride. "When I get "I've had the most absurd questions, like 'where's the swimming pool?"." says Mr back to Zurich I'm going to Byatt. "I wanted to say on the have zero in my bank acsecond floor, sir'. But we can count," Mr Schwengeler said handle almost any crisis and with a delighted grin, "but I'm a train man at heart. we'll remember this journey *On one journey we were all our lives."

> ● Graham Lord was a guest of the Eastern & Oriental Express. the Oriental Hotel in Bangkok, Malaysia Airlines and the Regent Hotel in Kuala

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 19

VOLVOX

(a) A genus of fresh-water organisms having a spherical form and provided with cilia which enable them to roll over in the water. From the Latin volvere to roll. "In one of my volvox apparently uninjured.*

WENTLETRAP

(c) A marine shell of the genus Scalaria or the family Scalariidae. An adaptation of the Dutch word for a winding stair or a spiral shell. A Wentletrap which fetched 40 guineas in 1701 (Rumphius) was worth only 20 guineas in 5 shillings."

(b) A common European species of pike-perch, Stizostedion lucioperca, valued as a food fish. In modern Latin sandra, "The German zander, pike-perch, one of the best-flavoured of the family."

(c) A gaiter, usually in the plural, from vamp the Norman French for that part of hose or stockings which covers the foot and ankle. "Instead of white stockings, he displayed gold-buttoned vamplets of orange velvet." Who he, the old dandy? Malvolio?

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running three hours late and it

looked as if two couples - and

their 21 pieces of Louis Vuitton

luggage — were going to miss their flights from Kuala Lum-

pur to Sydney, California and

Fiji: Where champagne Crusoes find cocktail bars and four-poster beds; plus, into the hills for local liquor

The club-class castaways



where in conveys so much more. On Fijian lips it means hello, welcome, cheers, hope you are enjoying your stay. Have a nice day, but with feeling. There are more than 300

islands in Fiji but before they tell you about the climate, the water sports and the luxurious resorts, most visitors will recall the people - the friendliest on earth and for whom smiling is a way of life. Many Fijians remain untouched by western" civilisation, never having ventured further than the next island, and all over this coral-fringed paradise the people are generous and

Yet that is the only thing the Fijian islands have in com-mon. Each has its own atmosphere and there is a vast range of attractions to suit every taste and almost every pocket, from hostels for Australian backpackers to exclusive private islands.

Our party visited three re-sorts banded together under the banner Five Star Fiji. We flew first by six-seater plane to the Wakaya Club, an hour's flight to the west of Viti Levu, the main island. The flight offered enticing views of the coral reef, lush vegetation and fine, secluded beaches before touching down on an emerald green airstrip that suddenly appeared from nowhere in the depth of the forest.

The resort owns the entire island, but accommodation is restricted to eight couples, each allocated a magnificent bure, a bungalow on traditional lines with a thatched roof. They are splendidly decorated with Fijian arts and crafts and come with every luxury, including a cocktail bar and four-poster bed. The sea is 50 yards away and the cham-

ingly easy nine-hole golf course (it meanders through a coconut grove and nuts falling from above are the main hazard), tennis and water sports of every description, from scuba-diving to windsurfing. The less energetic can simply enjoy the underwater wonderland with a trip in a glass-bottomed boat.

Picnic lunches on a private beach are a special treat. Staff drop holidaying couples at Ham with a vast ice box packed with fresh lobster and crab and bottles of Taittinger. pick-up total privacy is guaranteed. Hammocks hang invitingly from the trees and few can resist shedding all clothing for a romantic walk along the beach. It is like being a club-class castaway, a champagne Crusoe.

inner is heralded by the muffled beats of lali drums and is served in a huge 60ft-high pavilion built in traditional style. Four chefs provide sumptuous feasts and each night offers something special. One evening, all the food was cooked on hot coals buried in the sand: on another. supper was preceded by a magnificent display of Fijian

dance and song. Drinks are inclusive but, strangely, by 10pm the bar is deserted. Rob Miller, Wakaya's manager said: "The bures are so luxurious that most couples want to go back to their rooms pretty early. We keep the bar open as long as anyone wants and we get the add Australian who likes to sit drinking until 3am."

At Wakaya, we came across the kava drinking ceremony. The local chief arrived for the launch of a traditional Fijian boat which the staff had spent two years building. Before it could be rolled down the beach and into the waves, all had to sit cross-legged while bowls of kava, replenished from a huge



The island of Viti Levu is privately owned and accommodation is restricted to eight couples who stay in thatched bungalows, 50 yards from the sea

six-night stay): from £630 per couple per

stay): from £548 for two a day; flight

transfer costs £304 fore two return.

day; scaplane transfer costs £440 return for

two. Vatulele Island (minimum four-night

Health: Fiji does not suffer from tropical

diseases and innoculation is not required.

The water is safe to drink everywhere.

There is a departure tax of 20 Fijian

and credit cards are not accepted here.

dollars. Keep some cash because cheques

Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229

5260) recommends: In Search of Tusitala

by Gavin Bell (Picador, £6.99, ISBN 0 330

34245 2); Pacific Mythology by Jan Knappert (Diamond Books, £8.99, ISBN 0

261 66655 X): Happy Isles of Oceania by

Paul Theroux (Penguin, £6.99, ISBN 0 140 15976 Z; South Pacific Handbook by David Stanley (Moon Publications, £14.99, ISBN

wooden vessel, were passed around. There is one clap before drinking down in one. and three clans thereafter. The drink is made from yaquana, the root of the pepper tree, and is not alcoholic but deeply

Turtle Island, on the Blue Lagoon and first sighted by Captain Cook in 1774, is very different. We arrived after a 30-minute flight on a small sea-plane and waded through the water to be greeted by 20 singers in garlands and traditional costume. This set the tone, as everything on Turtle Island is conducted on a

communal basis. The bures are again luxurious, and instead of drums summoning one to dinner, the singers make a torchlight procession of invitation.

Honeymoons and weddings, conducted in delightful Fijian style, with local singers and costumes, are a speciality. We were privileged to attend the nuprials of Marty and Linda, a young Californian couple. Although no one other than the bride and groom had known each other for more than a few days, all 14 couples staying on the island were made to feel like guests of honour. Needless to say, the wedding ends with a kava

ceremony. The 500-acre island, the result of a volcanic eruption, is owned by Richard Evanson, a

visionary and former aviator who found his personal fulfilment in the Pacific The resort. in his absence, is managed by Joe Naisali, a huge and friendly Fijian from a neighbouring island, who appeared in the

■ Getting there: Quantas (0345 747767) flies

Sydney to Fiji has to be booked two weeks

■ When to go: the rainy season is between

tropical and rain is possible outside these

times. Average maximum temperatures are

28C between May and October and 30C in

■ Accommodation at Five-Star Fiji: prices

(rates are subject to 10 per cent Fijian tax).

Reservations and further information from

Club (minimum five-night stay) from £643

return per couple. Turtle Island (minimum

include all meals, drinks and activities

Travel Portfolio (01284 762255). Wakaya

per couple per day: flight transfer £515

in advance and not more than ten weeks

to Fiji from London via Sydney (or Los

Angeles) from £L165. The flight from

can be spent in Fiji. Resorts arrange

onward travel. Visas are not required.

November and April The climate is

the rainy season.

Lagoon, which was shot on location on Turtle Island. Much of Turde Island remains under mangrove swamp or dense forest and Mr Evanson has done much to restore the original eco-system after it had been ravaged by

Brooke Shields film The Blue

free-range goats. Memories never to be forgotten include riding horses along the beach at sunrise before a champagne breakfast and watching the release of the turtles. The resort offers cash for all turtles caught and then marks the shells. This renders them valueless to poachers and souvenir hunters and is harmless to the turtles. The waddle down the beach once they are released is followed by a spectacular break for freedom as they hit the water

I 566 91040 4).

FIJI FACT FILE

at torpedo-like speed. The staff enjoy socialising with the guests and, late at night, will keep an especially warm welcome for any visitor who joins the singing and strumming of two magnificent guitars left to the staff by an appreciative Eddie van Halen, the American rock musician while, again, the kava bowl is generously circulated.

night conversation consists of A anecdotes of drinking contests with rival villages and tales of falling down when the kava bowl is empty. It is rank bad manners for anyone to leave before the huge wooden bowl has been

Leaving the island for home has been known to reduce guests to tears. The entire staff come to the waterside and sing Isa Lei, a beautiful, haunting song of leaving that has an African-sounding melody. It can be a lengthy goodbye particularly when, as happened to us, excess weight prevents the seaplane from getting airborne. Luggage had to be unloaded to be sent on

later before we could take off. Our last island hop was our favourite. Vatulele differs from the other properties in Five Star Fiji in that the resort does not own the entire island and there are four villages where it is possible to get a glimpse of Fijian life.

Foremost among local crafts is the making of the tapa cloth from the mulberry tree. The bark is beaten by the women until it stretches from an inch wide to seven or eight inches. Several layers are then added until a cloth about three feet wide is created. Many of the women are deaf from beating the bark for up to 12 hours a day. A better, and certainly quieter, job is decorating the tapa in the traditional tan and black designs. A cloth, which

will have taken an entire day to make, costs less than £5, and an afternoon spent watching the process is fascinating. Vatulele also offers excellent diving, fine cuisine, 3,000year-old petroglyphs, caves

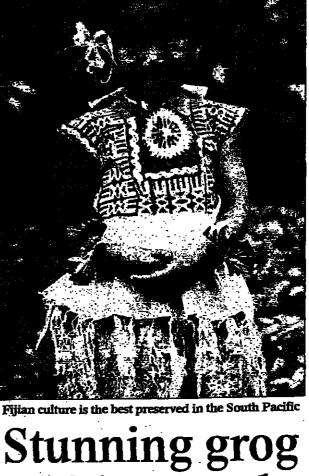
and magnificent bures built on a Sama Fë design from New Mexico, which seems to suggest an ancient connection between the native American peoples and the islanders of the south Pacific.

Vatulele's style is less pri-vate than Wakaya but not as communal as Turtle Island. We found it the perfect balance. In addition to the trips to the village, two experiences stand out. One was a boat trip for a private picnic on the uninhabited Nooki Nooki Island, a wonderful bird same tuary on what is little more than an pebble in the ocean. The other element that

makes Vatulele unique is the wit and wisdom of Martin Livingston, the artist, sculptor and bon viveur who manages the resort. Mr Livingston always joins his guests for meals, where he ribs them gently about their quirks and foibles. The stuffy could find his humour offensive, but most visitors love it, because he likes to weave tales.

On the first night he told all and sundry that I was in the timber industry and was in Fiji to chop down a few hundred acres of hardwoods in the rain forest. What he knew, and we didn't, was that several other guests were of a strongly ecological persuasion. We received some deeply shocked looks until our ecofriends realised that they, too, had been well and truly Livingstoned. Bula, bula.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON The author was a guest of Turtle Island and Vatulele



with a rural scene to match

get bored on beaches, even ones as perfect as Fiji's: white sand, coconut palms, sunbathing, snorkelling, and so on. All very nice, but I'd been in Fiji for a week and hadn't spoken to one Fijian, beyond a few pleasantries to staff at the resort. I wanted to see the other side of

away from the resorts. After a browse through my Lonely Planet guidebook decided on the village Navala, in the hills of Viti

the country, if there was one,

.evu, Fiji's main island. In fact, there are three Fijis. The tourist beaches are one. The second is the traditional Fijian villages, but to reach them I had to go through a third Fiji: small, bustling pastal towns full of the Indian migrants who constitute half

the nation's population. The town where I changed uses, Ba, might have been in India: shops selling aromatic spices, Indian sweet stalls, signs in Hindi and Úrdu.

Leaving Ba, the old British Leyland bus roared off in a cloud of dust and exhaust furnes. It struggled up steep inclines, tilting at angles that only Third World buses can manage. The sugar plantations of the hot coastal plains gave way to rugged hills, cliffs of black volcanic rock jutting out of dry yellow grass. And then, in a valley over a last hill, there was Navala.

The village, on a grassy, sloping riverbank, is one of the few in Fiji still built entirely of bures (pronounced boo-rays) About 60 of these thatchedroof homes stood in neat rows, surrounded by flowers, coconut paims and vegetable patches. Children ran between them; some youths played touch rugby, and men carrying machetes returned from the sugar fields. In the surrounding hills, fires burned as part of a wild boar hunt. It looked beautiful, a perfect little-

self-contained world. It reminded me of an African village, though any like-ness of the dark-skinned Fijians to Africans is misleading: Fijians are Melanesians who migrated from South-East Asia, not Africa.

Then I was shown into

the home of the village chief. It was one large room, the floor covered in palm mats; empty except for two beds and a wardrobe. On the wall were family photographs, and those of the Fijian prime minister and the Pope. The chief was a roundbellied, greying man, in jeans and sweatshirt. He invited me to drink some grog, or yaquana, made from a ground-root plant called kava. It is the traditional Fijian brew, drunk mainly by men. It is slightly narcotic and numbing. I'd heard that too much could cause you to lose all muscular control. I was a little disappointed to find that we were still perfectly co-ordinated when dinner arri-

I spent the night on a mattress on the floor, sharing the room with the chief's son, John, his wife and their child. Next morning, everyone went to church, "cos we Catholics, see. Having heard that visitors are often asked to deliver a sermon, I explored the village, instead, accompanied by the inevitable entou-

rage of skipping and giggling

fresh from the hunt.

children. A woman invited me into a bure to meet "the village nethall team" - and the conversation quickly reached a familiar stage.
"You married?"

"Oh. (A pause) "Single?"
"I have a girlfriend."
In Third World villages.

people tend to work on the principle that any single (western) gentle man, presumably in possession of a fortune. must necessarily be in need of a wife. For anyone travelling alone, a girlfriend (or boyfriend) is necessary fiction if you don't have the real thing

For once, Fiji is a place where the colonial legacy seems positive, Christianity ending years of rampant cannibalism. The British never invaded but were invited, in the mid-19th century, to take over the islands by the fearsome Chief Cakabu - said to have personally killed and inter-tribal warfare. The British, not surprisingly, initially turned down the offer.

ir Arthur Gordon, the first governor, decreed that no land could be sold to a non-Fijian, and no native labour could be used on the new sugar plantations. He also left the traditional village chief system in place and, as a result. Fijian culture is the best-preserved in the South

The other side of the British decision not to exploit native labour was the importation of workers from India. Someone had to keep the sugar mills supplied and Sir Arthur wasn't about to do the work himself. Denied access to land, the Indians in Fiji developed an industrious business ethic and now run the economy.

Two more contrasting cultures are hard to imagine. The Indians, living in small nowns on the coast, are hard-working, eager to make money and keen for progress. The Fijians are relaxed and conservative and sit around for hours. drinking grog. The British also installed an

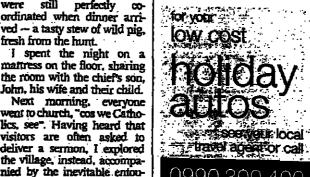
abiding affection for two of their favourite upper-class institutions: the Royal Family and rugby union, both almost obsessions in Fiji. The most common questions I was asked - after

"Where you from?" and "You married?" - were, "You play rugby?" and "How is Princess Next morning I caught the

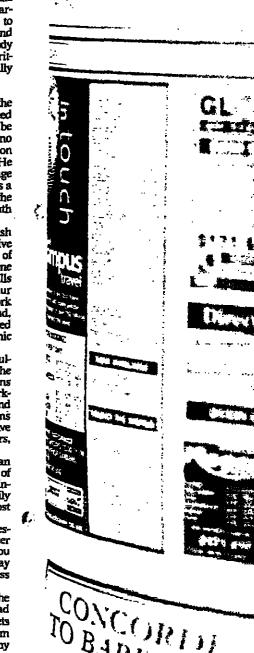
bus down the pot-holed road to the Indian supermarkets and sari shops of Ba, and from there I travelled back to my beach paradise.

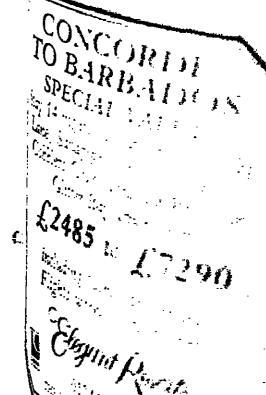
In two days I'd learnt just a little about Fiji. but it was more than I would have in a month at the beach.

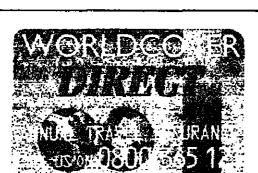
MARK MANN



Isle of arand peace







Northumberland: At the turn of the tide each day Lindisfarne returns to its island state and venerable past

Isle of war and peace

mile-long neck of land sinks beneath the North Sea for five hours, uncoupling Lindis-farne, also known as Holy island, from the Northumberland coast. Having consulted the tidal chart, I strode off along the Pilgrims' Causeway, cutting through mud flats. It was like crossing an infinity of

shiny chocolate pudding. The liquid call of countless curlews floated across the curlews floated across the emptiness. Through binoculars I watched them dip their long, curved beaks into the mud, pulling out wriggling lugworms. The mud popped and whistled, letting off fleeting, fetid odours which mingled with a salty zephyr wafting off the sea.

As I progressed, Lindisfarne's huge, monolithic, castle-crowned rock encircled by sand dunes, green farmland

sand dunes, green farmland and the blackened remains of a great priory, appeared out of the morning mist.

with a run

rene to ma

Over the centuries, islanders have been monks, fishermen and farmers. Nowadays it is more lucrative to offer bed and breakfast, run tea shops or sell Lindisfarne mead. The island is the jewel in the crown of the "Northumbrian Heritage" industry, and seethes with tourists.

"This bridge is totally sub-merged at high tide" warns a blunt road sign at the end of the causeway. It might also usefully add. "And these mud flats disappear more quickly than you would believe possible". I thought, as a single, shallow wave raced in, engulfing acre after acre much faster

than most people can run. Thank goodness for the tide. As the last crossing time approached, day visitors hurried to their cars to join a single-file, migratory route back to the Al. Soon after, Lindisfarne turned back into an island and its singular

atmosphere re-emerged.
I walked round the perime ter wall just above the highwater level and climbed up on to the bluffs to listen in solitude to the wind and the gulls and the waves breaking on the black rocks below.

Later, I wandered among the ruined arches and columns of the 1,000-year-old priory, on the green turf where great flagstone once lay. It seemed an appropriate place to reflect on the island's history. In AD 635 St Aidan was sent

by St Columba to establish Lindisfarne as his base and convert the powerful warrior heathens of Northumbria to an alien religion demanding peace and contemplation.
Within a century, according to
the Venerable Bede, the great
scholar who recorded this era. many Northumbrians, both noble and simple, laid aside their weapons, preferring to take monastic vows than study

the art of war". Was this why Northumberland seemed defenceless against the raping, pillaging and havoc-wreaking Norsemen the following century?

The monks were slaughtered or driven out, but 200 years later others returned to rename it Holy Island and rebuild the priory. They stayed until the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1500s. Later that century, most of the stones from the priory were taken to build Lindisfarne Castle as part of the war effort against the Scots.

Pacifism may be less popular in the late 20th century than it was a millennium and a half ago, but the ethereal influence of the early Lindisfarne Christians lives on in



Lindisfarne Castle, encircled by sand dunes and farmland, was built in the late 16th century as part of the English war effort against the Scots

aura, legend and folklore. St Aidan, Bede and, most of all, St Cuthbert are all still revered. The latter was a shepherd-turned monk who meditated in solitude on the island of Inner Farne for nine years before becoming Bishop of Lindisfarne. He is credited with countless miracles and his tomb is the holiest shrine in Durham Cathedral.

To follow Cuthbert's footsteps to the Farne Islands, I returned to the mainland and drove ten miles down the coast, past the looming fortress of Bamburgh. Northumberland is peppered with such strongholds as constant reminders of the almost incessant hostility between Scots

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and English, which the message of the Celtic Christians proved powerless to prevent. At the fishing port and holiday village of Seahouses, I ioined a boat tour of the Farne Islands, which are scattered between two-and-a-half and

eight miles off the coast.

n all there are 28 of these islands, some sinking and re-emerging with the tide. The highest rise 100st above sea level, their characteristic fluted stacks with angular corners looking as if they have been sliced off a larger chunk of land. The archipelago is owned by

the National Trust and is inhabited only by a few lighthouse keepers and wildlife wardens, who share the islands with hundreds of thousands of seabirds and several herds of seals.

Landings are permitted on two of the larger islands, Inner Farne and Staple. Most tours from Seahouses spend about an hour on one of these islands, and a couple more weaving among the others. My trip rounded the lighthouse on Longstone, one of the furthest islands, from where the young heroine Grace Darling, famous throughout northeast England, launched her courageous rescue of the shipwrecked crew of the Forfanshire in 1838. Then we stopped to bob about, watch-

AUSTRALIA

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ing fat, slumbering seals and their pups basking on the rocks before regaining their grace when they slid back into time to leave. the water.

The birds are superabundant. Inner Farne, where we landed, has one of the largest colonies of puffins in the British Isles. I also watched crowds of sleek razorbills, ugly herring gulls and mottled eider ducks. The menacing, red-beaked Arctic terns were less welcoming. I saw one dive on an innocent visitor, a middle-aged woman who was clearly regarded as an intruder, as she stepped ashore. Blood was drawn and the attack was successful in that she retreated angrily into

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St Cuthbert's chapel, only to re-emerge, clutching a book on top of her head, when it was

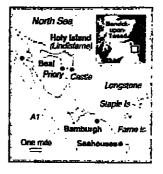
The chapel is built on the site where the saint meditated alone in his cell. However. amid the cacophony of seahirds and day-trippers, it was hard to take oneself back to that age.
I cannot help feeling that it

would be a different story if one could spend a night alone there, dwelling on the "demons in cowls, their heads long, their countenances most hideous", which Cuthbert described and is believed to have vanquished.

MARTIN SYMINGTON

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FACT FILE

How to get there: Lindisfarne is about ten miles south of Berwickupon-Tweed and the Scottish border. Information on tides is displayed at both ends of the causeway, or ring 01289 330733 (Mon-Sat 10am-1pm, 2-4pm). Boat tours of the Farne Islands leave from Seahouses in April to the end of September. These are cancelled in had weather.

■ Where to stay: on Lindisfarne, try the Lindisfarne Hotel (01289 3892731, £49 for double Olde Ship Inn (01665 720200). £60 for double B&B, closed Dec and Jan. Linden Hall Hotel (01670 516611), near Morpeth, is luxurious and costs £125 for double B&B. Also recommended is Marshall Meadows Hotel (01289)

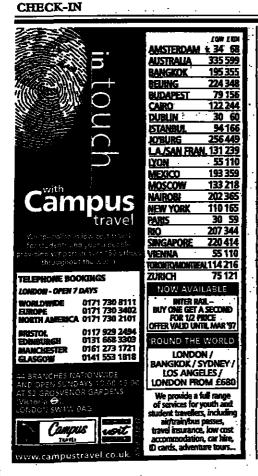
331133), £80 for double B&B. ■ What to see: Ainwick Castle (01665 510777) is still Northumberland but open to the public. It has the Regimental Museum of Royal Northumberland fusiliers, and Capability Brown gardens, Warkworth Castle (01665 711423) is medieval in character with a dark, austere keep. Shakespeare set several scenes of Henry IV here, dramatising the intrigue between the Earl of Northumberland and his son Harry Hotspur. Bamburgh (01668 214208) in its heyday was a royal castle where the kings of

Northumbria were crowned. It fell into ruin and has been restored in a bizarre Victorian style. The Grace Darling Museum (01668 214465), also in Bamburgh, celebrates the heroine's life and displays her lifeboat. She died of TB in 1842 at the age of 26, and is buried in the graveyard

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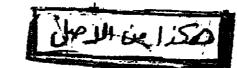
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THE OLD PALACE, CHESTER CHI 1RB









Calvia clean-up

HAS MAGALUF gone soft? The Majorcan resort, where ten years ago I couldn't find the beach among the skyscrapers and lager-lout bars, is introducing Tai Chi exercises on the beach, as well as tea dances, Spanish language and cookery lessons.

It's all part of the Calvia region's clean-up, which has cost £78 million since 1990 and is aimed at transforming Magaluf, Palma Nova, Santa Ponsa and Illetas into resorts fit for human beings (preferably families).

The resorts now have proper pavements and walkways, litter bins that don't convert into beach kickabouts and, instead of building offensive skyscraper hotels, they've pulled some down.

Next resort on the hit-list is Paguera, which has excellent beaches but a thoroughly scruffy main road. About £4.6 million has been ear-marked for improvements.

Cruise début

THOUGH latecomers to cruising, Britain's largest tour operator, Thomson Holidays (0990 502555), is going full steam ahead with a programme of cruises for 74,000 passengers next year. Prices start at £399 for a week out of Palma in November though £600 is the average

weekly cost. Following a successful winter in the Caribbean, Thomson is to introduce three and four-night cruises from the Bahamas taking in Miami, Key West and Coco Cay, on board Royal Caribbean

Line's 2,518-passenger Sovereign of the Seas. A two-week package, with four nights at sea and ten ashore in an allinclusive hotel in Nassau costs from £1,259. A two-week cruise-and-

stay holiday with one week in a Dominican Republic hotel and another on board Norwegian Caribbean Line's 1,500 passenger Seaward, costs £1,115-£1,259, sailing from Santo Domingo.

Turf 'n' surf

RANCH holidays probably owe as much to the authentic old Wild West as Africa's wildlife does to Mickey Mouse (on one I tried in the Carskills, no one was allowed to canter because of "insurance" problems), but they can be fun and offer reasonably active holidays in nice places. Ranch America (0181-868 2970) will steer competent riders to more adventurous establishments. The David Ranch in Wyoming, for ex-ample, is a full-working range with 6,000 head of cattle, and holidaymakers may be asked to herd, brand,

how to rope. The cost is £1,290 fully inclusive. Twin Peaks Ranch, Idaho. offers a turf 'n' surf combination of riding coupled with white-water rafting on the River Salmon, which runs through the ranch. The cost is

£1,590, inclusive for a week. Kuoni (01306 742222) has introduced holidays in dude ranches in Arizona costing from £946 a week.



JILL CRAWSHAW'S INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TIPS



Would-be dudes can ride 'em cowboy style on working-ranch holidays in America

Cost-cutters

A SERIES of low-price city breaks, valid from January I to March 19, 1997, has been launched by British Airways Holidays. Prices start at £99 for a night with B&B in Paris, Ell5 in Amsterdam. Three

nights in Rome start at £312, in Budapest £309, and £305 in Monte Carlo. tions (0181-577 2717). The walk links abbeys, castles, market towns and moorlands associ-

Holy trail A NEW eight-day walk along St Cuthbert's Way from Melrose to Bamburgh, Scotland.

is offered by Sherpa Expedi-

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THE

ated with the 7th century saint. One night is spent in Lindisfarne (Holy Island). Self-guided walks cost £385 (escorted £450), which include B&B at inns, routes and baggage transport.

The best wine bars on the grapevine

than self-assured about the quality of its wines, tongue-scarring stuff is still served in many cafés. This is why the French drink so much Kir as an aperitif: the creme de cassis or blackcurrant liqueur kills the bleachy taste of cheap white wine. A great improvement on this is the revival of the Cardinal, which couples crème de mûre (bramble) with a chilled light-red wine such as Gamay or Sancerre.

For a superior glass, how-ever, the sensible Parisian attends his local wine bar, particularly at lunchtime when food, especially cheese, a step above café fare, is served. Wine bar owners have a reputation to keep. Their vintages are carefully chosen.
often specialising in a specific area such as the Rhone, Bordeaux or the Loire, and cus-tomers and owners can indulge in pretentious and useful dis cussion of each bottle.

For those who are not wine buffs, a few hours' work at the zinc in a wine bar can result in knowledge useful for purchasing a case. Many Paris wine bars also sell wine from their cellars by the bottle or dozen to

take home.
Le Rubis, an ancient institution just down from the Opéra. is your traditional wine bar. with sawdust on the floors and barrels on which to stand your glass. After tasting, you can buy bottles to take away. It is noisy, amusing and packed, particularly when the Beaujo-lais Nouveau is launched.

GENTLEMEN

KATHARINE ALLEN

there are branches of L'Ecluse wine bar - a reliable chain with good wines which lacks eccentricity but is better than falling into the nearest café.

Perhaps the best-decorated wine bar in the city is the Clown Bar, next door to the old Cirque d'Hiver building, which is tiled with circus and clown motifs. The wine is served in generous glasses.



with much discussion. On the Left Bank, the Bistro des Augustins is charming, with an Art Deco bar and lighting, delicious sourdough Pain de Poilane, runny cheeses and homemade puddings. Again.

wines can be taken away.

Although French-style wine bars invaded Britain long ago. revenge has been taken by an Englishman, Mark Williamwho opened Willi's Wine Bar in the business district 16 years ago, and its offshoot, Juveniles, more recently. Willis has superb food and a cellar which varies from the

GENTLEMEN

the glass, which you wish were larger, cost Frl6-Fr70 (about £2-£8). The bar specialises in wines from the Rhône, the South West and Provence. sherries, and what the owner describes as "fun wines" from

Italy, Spain and California. The specials change every day. Last Monday he had a fine 1993 Mersault from Pierre Morey, and a Domaine de Trevallon Cabernet Sauvignon of the same year from

Provence. Although Willi's does not sell selections from its cellar, Juveniles will supply wine by the case. Bottles usually costs Fri6-Fr30, and is of more

recent vintage.

Mr Williamson says his clientele was mostly French until the Channel Tunnel opened. At lunchtime, workers pour in to Willi's from the Bourse or ministries nearby. The other night at dinner, however, we were trapped at a table between four London accountants and American businessmen and women from New Jersey, expertly mistranslating the menu.

KATE MUIR

● L'Ecluse, (Paris chain), 64 Rue François-Ier, 8th (47 2077 09). Willi's, 13 Rue de Petits-Champs, 1st (42 61 05 09). Le Rubis, 10 Rue du Marché. Saint-Honoré, 1st (42 61 03 34). Bistro des Augustins, 39 Quai (43 54 41 65). Juveniles, 47 Rue de Richelieu, 1st (42 97 46 49). Clown Bar, 114 Rue Amelot,

<u>Gentlemen</u>

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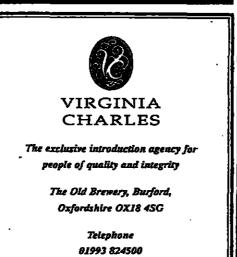
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CHRISTMAS CHESS QUIZ by Raymond Keene

Kacakovski-Szuhanek

Palic 1995

Black to play

In this position, White is not just a

piece up but seems better devel-

oped and better centralised. Is this

Yanes-Foyo; Cuba 1995

Black to play

A piece down, it hardly seems likely

that Black can force perpenual check, let alone win. Is there a

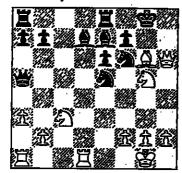
surprise?

FROM Monday to Friday, your reward for solving the Winning Move puzzle is the warm glow of pride in your achievement. At Christmas, though, a more tangible gratification is on offer, namely a generous supply of champagne for the winner.

Here are four positions to test your chess skills over the Christmas break. In each case I require the first move only. The reward for the winner is a jereboam of Moët et Chandon champagne.

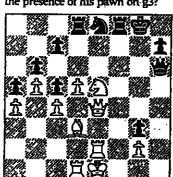
Gipslis-Pushkeits Berlin 1995 White to play

White has sacrificed a piece in order to cluster his attacking forces around the black king. The obvious try is 1 Bh7+, but after 1 ... Kh8 can White make progress, or does White have something stronger in the initial position?



Gonzalez-Bravo Havana 1995 Black to play

A pawn which has marched close to the enemy king can be extremely dangerous. How did Black exploit the presence of his pawn on g3?



By Raymond Keene

in-the-Strand.

weeks time.

ACROSS

9 Obtain (3)

17 Annul (6)

1 Travel: be a success (2,6)

8 Feet-thrashing torture (9)

10 Draught animals (4)

14 One in minor orders (6)

20 Charge for service (3)

22 Single-beer pub (4,5)

legality (5) 24 All-female event (3.5)

SOLUTION TO NO 970

21 Exodus 22 Immune 23 Sargasso

ACROSS: 2 Pass/over 6 Voodoo 8 Horror 9 Denmark. 10 Avert 12 Lorna Doone 16 One-man band 18 Scone 20 Hostile

DOWN: I Somehow 2 Porridge 3 Slogan 4 Verge 5 Rarity 7 Dominion 11 Verbatim 13 Oratorio 14 Incline 15 Assess

18 Bargain; cut small piece (4)

23 Out of the sun: of dubious

11 Exclusive group (6)

13 Openly honest (6)

Silly but attractive woman

mas Quiz, The Times, I Pennington Street, London El 9XN. Normal Times competition rules apply. The winner will be the first answer drawn out of a hat which

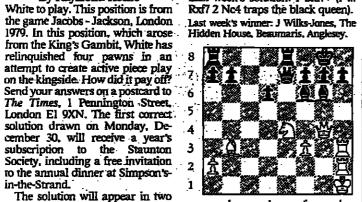
Answers should reach me at The

Times no later than January 3,

1997, addressed to: Chess Christ-

solves all four puzzles correctly. Those readers who solve all four positions (and I shall give the answers in the new year) can give themselves a pat on the back. One of them, and I shall not say which. defeated your columnist — and I had to look up how the game

continued.



Last week's solution: 1 Bxf7+ (1

Rxf7 2 Nc4 traps the black queen).

Champagne MOET&CHANDON FOR the Christmas Punchline competition, readers are invited to

write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from The Strand Magazine (reproduced with permission from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library). The winner will receive a jeroboam of Moet & Chandon champagne. Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption (31), Weekend, The Times, l Pennington Street, London El 9XN. The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is January 1, 1997.





Spades, stakes, mallets - that'll be twenty quid Dr Van Helsing. Make sure they're back by sunrise"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above)

THIS week the Games page adds extra sparkle to the satisfaction of pitting your wits against the quiz masters and the puzzle setters. As a festive incentive there are jeroboams of Moët & Chandon champagne for the winners of the Bridge, Chess, Computer Games, Punchline and the Waterstones Crossword. Normal Times competition rules apply. The judges' decision is final and they cannot enter into correspondence.



was submitted by Brian Lockett of London

By Philip Howard VOLVOX a. A fresh-water ball b. A Swedish autophile c. An involuntary cry

WORD-WATCHING

WENTLETRAP a. A dog-cart b. A pittali c. A shell

ZANDER a. A wise lawyer b. A fish c. Unleavened bread

VAMPLET a. A Lolita b. A handkerchief c. A gaiter

Answers on page 15

CHRISTMAS BRIDGE QUIZ

by Robert Sheehan

WHERE it is relevant, you are playing good-quality rubber thing. Partially-correct answers 25 3NT will be awarded a reduced score.

I These are the North-South cards: **¥5432** +5432 **+**5432

.. N W. S **±KQJ10 ▼KQJ** +KQ1 +KQJ

Neither opponent has a suit longer than four cards. How many tricks can you guarantee in a No-Trump contract? (10 points)

2 (i) How do you play this hand in 7NT on a spade lead, East playing the queen? (5 points) (ii) În what circumstances does correct play gain? (5 points)

±542 ♥A643 • none **♣AKQ1098** N W E S **ELA** ¥0

÷64 3 Your partner deals and opens One Spade and you hold: **≜**AKJ6 ♥AKJ1083 ◆J **♣**J9 What do you reply? (10 points)
4 You are on lead from this hand:

AKQ1032 ♥A62 +754 263

13. In 1927 an Ai Jolson film ushered in the era of the talkies. What was it called?

14. Which political leader and founder of the Chinese Communist Party, set out his philosophy in his famous Little Red Book?

15. Who is the star of the highest-rated TV talk show?

A. Upright B. Wise

A. April Showers

A. Deng Xiaoping B. Mao Tse-tung C. Ken Hom

B. Sonny Boy

C. Jazz Šinger

C. Sane

+AKQJ1097

running it to your queen. How do you plan the defence? (10 points) Send your answers to the Christmas Bridge Competition, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London El 9XN by Friday, January 3, 1997.

Your partner leads the queen of

spades; declarer wins with the king

and returns the nine of diamonds

What is your lead? (10 points)

This has been the auction:

5 You are East on the hand below.

¥A532

43

+KJ10873

+953

E¦ ♥K76

S +065

Anyone who has played interna-tional bridge in the past five years will be handicapped 5 points. The winners' names will be published on Saturday, January II. The first prize is a jeroboam of Moet and Chandon champagne.

Second, third and fourth prizes will be annual subscriptions to one of the main bridge magazines Unternational Popular Bridge, Bridge Magazine and Bridge Plus). Six prizes, allotted by ran-dom draw from all non-prize winners, will be copies of More Bedside Bridge, edited by Elena Jeronimidis.

of the Wars of the Roses, fought in 1485? A. Battle of Bosworth Field

20. What was Groucho Marx's real

21. Which 13th century charter granted

by King John, was seen as guaranteeing human rights against the excessive use

22. In which fantasy movie does a young

girl wish for her younger brother to be

23. What did Pope Paul III do to Henry VIII and Pope Pius V do to Elizabeth !?

Good luck!

Battle of York

A. Julius

B. Leonard

C. Herbert

of royal power:

taken away?

C. Labyrinth

A. Honour Marry

A. Mappa Mundi

B. Magna Carta C. Domesday Book

B. The Neverending Story

C. Battle of Agincourt

CHRISTMAS COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES QUIZ

THE following questions are from A. Apple B. Sgt Pepper C. Penny Lane the quiz element of four widely available CD-Roms. The winner 5. Where was Princess Elizabeth, the future British Queen, when she heard of the death of her will receive a jeroboam of Moët et Chandon champagne. Mark your father, George VI? A. Kenya B. Balmoral

answers clearly, with your name, address and home telephone number - and send your entry to: End of Year Quiz, Computer Games & Pastimes, Weekend, The Times, 1. Pennington Street, London El 9XN. Your entries must reach us by Friday January 3.

L In computing, what name is given to a list of options displayed on a monitor from which the user selects a required A. Directory

B. Menu

2. Neurtsy was one of the names originally suggested for Snow White's Seven Dwarfs. Which of the following names was not among the origina suggestions? A. Whiny B. Awful

3. Edward VIII was forced to abdicate in order to be able to marry which US A. Mrs Battenburg

B. Mrs Wallace C. Mrs Simpson 4. What name did the Beatles give to the recording company which they estab-

lished in the late 1960s?

C. India 6. In what 1956 movie does alien plant life take over a small California town? A. Invasion of the Body Snatchers B. Tremors

C. The Blob 7. Who was the father of Cleopatra's son, Ptolemy XV? A. Julius Caesar? B. Mark Antony

C. Her brother, Ptolemy 8. Which German-born pianist and conductor fled to England in 1848 and settled in Manchester where he founded the celebrated orchestra which bears his name?

C. Spohr 9. What kind of creatures are bass, brill and hake? A. Fish

B. Reptiles 10. Anthony Trollope's mother was a prolific novelist and travel writer. What

was her first name?

by Tim Wapshott



Donald Duck is the mascot of which American university?

A. Isabelle B. Frances

II. Which act of 1940 prevented UK

employers giving canteen meals in lieu of wages? A. Truck Act B. Factories Act C. Employment Act

the Latin word sapiens?

A. Oprah Winfrey B. Michael Parkinson C. Esther Rantzen 16. What country has the most lawyers?

A. United States

B. Germany C. Japan
17. What joker earned millions from a 24. Donald Duck is the mascot of which

A. Jack Nicholson B. Michael Keaton C. Joan Rivers

18. How long can a person stand on one A. 17hr 48 min B. 55hr 35 min

12. Homo sapiens is a scientific name for C. 102hr 2min modern man. What is the meaning of

A. Tallahassee State B. Oregon
C. Washington State

25. Which Hollywood actor was Govemor of California from 1966-74, and US President from 1981-89? A. John Wayne B. Ronald Reagan

19. What was the name of the last battle C. Marion Brando

THE WATERSTONE'S CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

THE perimeter consists of four unclued thematic elements. All answers are entered normally. Across clues contain an extra letter which must be removed before solving, the clue after. removal being cryptically, though not always grammatically sound. These extra letters in order give the start of a quotation. Down answers are defined correctly but cryptic indications lead to the answer with one letter advanced in the alphabet by some value (using A=1 to Z=26 and going "round the end where necessary). These added values give the completion of the quotation and its speaker. Apart from some proper names all entries are given by Chambers (1993).

ACROSS :

No 971

DOWN:

vant (5)

geom.) (4)

13 Muddle up (7)

15 Overcome (7)

tion) (6)

1 Launcelot - Shylock's ser-

2 Part of horse's foot; -ak.

Russian author (7)

3 Reference line (coord.

Make possible (6)

Picture; likeness (5)

Temp. bridge; card game (7)

Bunch of flowers; aroma (7)

12 Composed, serious manner (7)

16 Withdraw (from eg federa-

17 Fragrant-wood conifer (5) 19 Religious devotion (5)

21 Bloke; crack with dryness (4)

Single fault in American edition (7) A rugby back on line, getting one knockout point for

Harims Scot eyes with insufficient acquaintance (7) Something like a morsel with density and texture (5) They provide protection for my entry into squalid areas pursuing Australian (7)
Could carrier be back in prison nearly after one? (6)

He takes stock of tough screw according to Spooner Born Free's one featured in Movie Institute lesson (7)

Pict worker, rumour has it, is one under age (5) K even sold running shoe to South Africa — more

than a scandal! (9) Whisper stammered okay about Starr returning, not 26 28 Wearing dress with the bared back acquired by

limited edition (5) Corrupt private secretary, forced to retire, wept (7) Uneasily going outside to lay out rope that's close to 33

tearing (7) Take away protection from bone with old probe (6) One accepting risky political office loses important 37

Impressive! Not many spent recklessly, endlessly (5)

Disparate authors have written about this creature Maiden loses head in statue that's stunted (5) He's brought in to pin a kilim back for Indian (7)

DOWN

Bad luck over street robbery (5) Enjoy oneself in America with sailor? Whichever way you look at it, that's fishy (6) Salome dancing gets head off theologian's body (5) Cape forward dives, securing three points (9) Also I secured support for branch destroyed in fire

Cooked rare, note, one is a 'bloody' problem (7) Girl, possibly foreign, from Greek city turning

Avoid work, cutting lawn with this? (5) Female shark certainly unknown in America (7) Early saint's country (7) Servant's given small amount by custom with little time to finish off chore (9)

He has made particular provision for law about handgun coming to nothing (7) Drunken Scots in rowing boat having harmonious relationship (7) Tart's client's eccentric man about town (7) Food shop finding most of fruit decay is able to be

removed (7) Antique cunningly made with dainty interior is impressive (7)

A fool, I did Ring in reverse on first of cycles (6) Lightweight material used by lovely drag-artist (5) Macintosh's query as to source as to source of weak musical (5) 35

Lament Australian's presence in pool (5)

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Solution to No 3386: Eight Ways by Alcuin

Completed intermediate

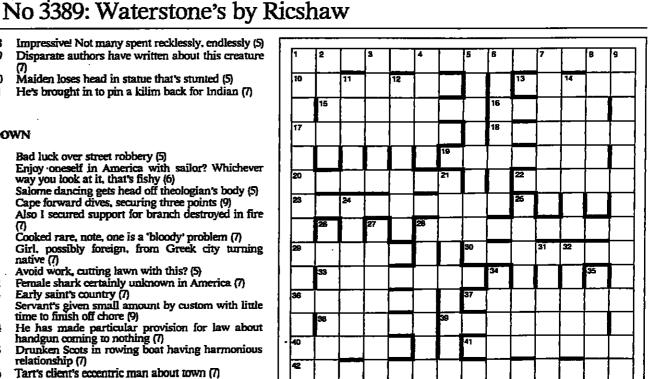
only, no letters showing.

diagram. Solvers were expected to send a solution with the colours

1 Tactful, 2 Archangelic, 3 Besee, 4 Escheat, 5 Stick, 6 Eta. 7 Aha. 8 Nailer. 9 Cher. 10 Wane, 11 Kabele, 12 Aesc, 13 Wight, 14 Hebe, 15 Tahr, 16 Idle, 17 Glad, 18 Blew, 19 Taco, 20 Leu, 21 Faine, 22 Tuba, 23 Elegiac, 24 Ball,

25 Lar, 26 Cid, 27 Yard, 27 You The winners are J.P. and E.A. Ruff of Eastleigh, Hampshire

The two runners up are R. Tyler of Exeter and Mr and Mrs P.C. Hall of Poole, Dorset



WATERSTONE'S CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD No 3389

NAME... ADDRESS.....

Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Waterstone's Christmas Crossword No 3389, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE, by Friday, January 3, 1997.

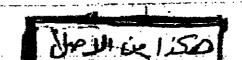


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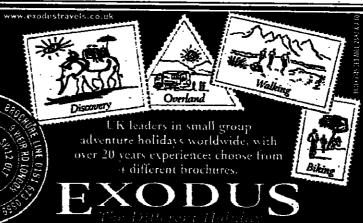
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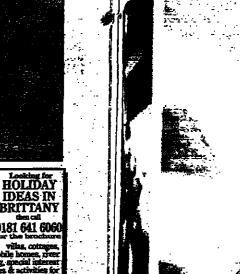
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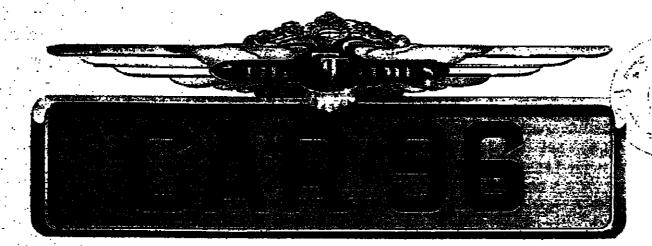
CHRISTMAS AND







Off-road **Explorer** puts Ford in big league



Gem restored for a lucky winner

Page 5



SATURDAY DECEMBER 21 1996

You may as well ask for Rudolph

Kevin Eason on some presents Santa Claus will not leave under many trees this year



Hartley: "Lots of people will be disappointed."

here are bad tidings: that bulge in your Christmas stocking is only a tangerine. The nearest you are going to get to

For this is the Christmas when Santa's sack is bare of all the most desirable toys. Pine wistfully for your Mercedes SLK, Porsche Boxster. Jaguar XK8 or MGF because there is none to be bad anywhere in Britain.

The SLK has not only sold out, dealers this week were refusing deposits because waiting lists are an average two years. Go to some Mercedes showrooms and a glum salesman will tell you to wait as long as four years, such is worldwide demand for Mercedes' cute £30,000 sportster.

Even if you look for an alternative to the SLK, you will have plenty of time to knit a nice new stocking for the end of your bed because it will be next Christmas before the waiting lists clear on most of

the others in the top ten rooms, presumed snapped up seasonal "wish list": at least a by enthusiasts. And the mostyear each for the BMW 23 and praised car of the year, the the Porsche Boxster, while innovative Lotus Elise is Jaguar dealers this week were scarcer than a turkey at the January sales. The company is saying they cannot get their hands on any more gorgeous only able to make around new £50,000 XK8 coupés or 1.200 a year at the moment convertibles until October. and they have already been One Porsche dealer says: sold, so executives are warn-"We were taking orders two years ago even before people ing that customers will have to wait 18 months before they see saw the car. There is nothing first sight of that futuristic

we can do because there just aluminium chassis. aren't enough cars to satisfy But if you really are desperate for that last-minute Christ-Even sub-£20,000 vehicles mas gift, you could cheat, are in short supply. Fiat bypass Santa and try Tom Coupes, the MGF and the Alfa Hartley instead. Even though GTV are missing from showhe has no elves to help him.

Tom has sold eight SLKs four for Christmas presents in the last month at the same time as many Mercedes deal-ers were biting their nails waiting for the delivery of just one car. The premium for beating the four-year queue was £15,000 over list price, but when the cupboards are this bare, some buyers simply will not wait.

Tom will have Boxsters in stock before some Porsche dealers, probably at a £5,000 premium over the £19,950 list price, depending on demand, while the first Bentley Continental T - the fastest and probably the most desirable

Bentley yet - will land in his showroom in Overseal, Derbyshire, ready for January 1 delivery. Price £228,000, which is £8,000 over list, but Price £228,000, this is the most exotic of the exotic, a model so rare that buyers will scratch your eyes

ot Tom, because he has 15 years' experience in buying and selling the cars that nobody else can find. When the waiting lists build, the desperate turn to Tom, whose contacts range across the country making him mo-toring's Mr Fix-it. If it exists, he can find it. "People know they can trust me," he says. "I aim to get any car to a customer within a week of the order. If I can't get it, I say straight away. But the deal is always fair and I will be

flexible as much as I can be. "The SLK has been very, very popular and there will be a few ladies waking up on Christmas morning to a nice new sports car. But ordering was so far ahead, lots of people will be disappointed."

If your Christmas gift list has been reduced to a straight choice between socks, a scarf and talcum power or writing

for a four-bedroomed detached, then Santa might still be able to come to your aid.

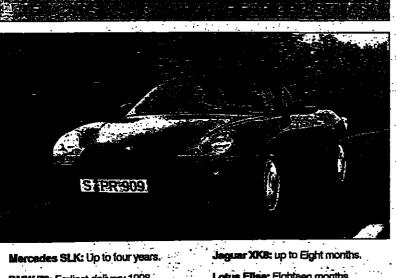
There are some exclusive cars still available, not bargains exactly and not likely to have their sticker prices slashed in the January sales even if you decide to wait.

What about the last of ten James Young Bentleys which is on sale at H. R. Owen in London, for example? Bad news: it is £190,000. Good news: based on a 150mph Turbo R, the James Young conversion has added a dramatic black pearlescent finish to an equally dramatic black and yellow interior (suitable transport for a millionaire beekeeper, perhaps), with built-in attaché case, umbrella and 40 other goodies to keep you occupied while you drive in the

ultimate flying tank.
Or you could try something even more exotic such as the Maserati 300S on sale at the Paradise Garage in London. Stirling Moss said the sixcylinder, 3-litre "Mazzer", first raced in 1956, was the finest sports car he ever drove - and now you can find out what he was talking about. A snip at £500,000 or thereabouts. Oh. go on, Scrooge. Buy it: it's Christmas — and anyway.



For the man who has everything: you can buy him a Maserati 300S — the finest sports car Stirling Moss ever drove — for £500,000. The price is not likely to drop in the January sales if you decide to wait



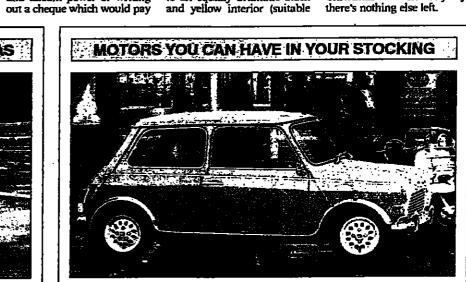
Lotus Elise: Eighteen months. BMW Z3: Earliest delivery 1998. Alfa GTV: Five months. Porache Boxster: Earliest 1998. Flat Coupé: Four months. BMW 5-series: eight months. MGE: Five months. Mercedes E-class: Eight months.

OB CARNET AFFORD FOR CHRISTMAS 1900 TU

Bentley Continental T: 5228,000 ono. Fastest Bentley of all with amazing milled aluminium dashboard and loads of luxury.

Masserati 300S: £500,000 ono. Super cool at super price. The sports car Stirling Moss rates above all others.

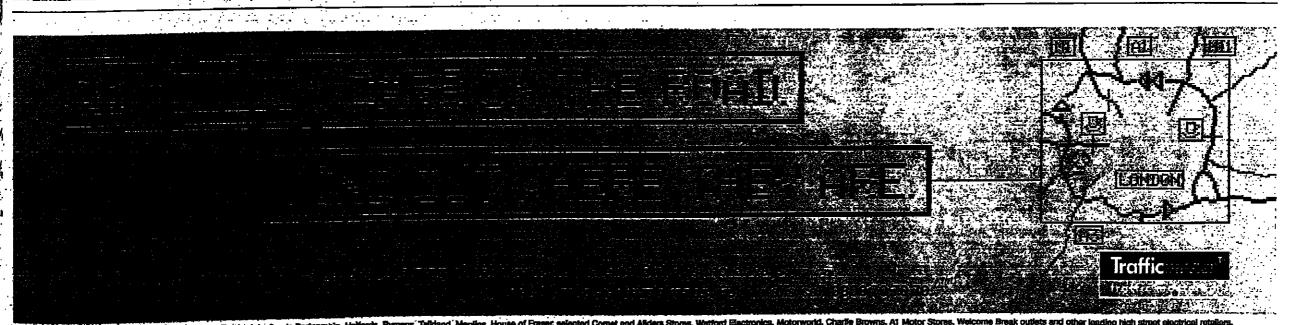
nes Young Bentley: £190,000 onc. Astonishing upgrade on a Turbo R with black and yellow uphoistery and even more gadgets than the production version.



Mini: £9,000 on the road. Best fun you can have with your clothes on this party season. Still lovable, even though middle-age spread has put up the price.

[taljet scooter: £2,500. As ridden by Michael Schumecher around the Formula One paddock. Available in Ferrari red and yellow at H. R. Owen.

Ford Ka: £7,350. Ka to make you go "Ahh". Cutesy-pie looks and roomy interior. And you could be first to get one, so place orders now.



Verily, the man named Call Me Nico was of the place of the Bush of the Shepherd, and the wise men rejoiced because it was not sarf of the river

Unto us a Datsun shall be borne

nd it came to pass that three wise men stumbled into the night after a few flagons at the Oriental Club opposite Bond Street Tube station. They did not get into their cars because that would have made them three foolish men. Instead, they began hailing black cabs, some of which stopped but none of which was prepared to

travel sarf of the river. Guv. So often was this reason advanced in the next half hour that one of the wise men, being from out of town, asked why no one had told him that the Thames had changed its name to the River Guv. The other wise men thought this so amusing that they fell about the pavement, causing the next convoy of cab drivers to switch off their For Hire signs as they approached. The three men steaded themDRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

selves and resumed hailing. An aged Datsun stopped a few yards away, the driver got out and approached the three wise men: "Thirty pund, I take anywhere you. Be hopping in." The driver. whose name seemed to be Call Me Nico, opened one of the car's rear

doors with a wrench (or rather, he took out a wrench in order to open one of the car's rear doors) and the wise men entered to a smell of apple blossom air freshener so powerful it almost overcame the stench of mildew from the greving fleece lining the rear parcel shelf.

"Where you go?" Call Me Nico said, and the wisest of the men replied: "Follow that star." Call Me Nico peered through his wind-screen looking for Madonna or Bobby Charlton, two of the few stars whose names had permeated the Bosnian hills whence he came. Identifying neither, he shrugged and headed west, past Harrods and towards the Cromwell Road. Two of the wise men had their heads out of the rear windows, gazing at the sky. The English, Call Me Nico thought: drink, throw up, drink, throw up, is all ever they do.



By a miracle so appropriate at this time of year. Call Me Nico and the star were heading in the same direction. Two of the wise men congratulated the driver on this feat, but Call Me Nico heard nothing above the engine roar: he had removed the rear silencer to make three saucepans so that his wife could cook food.

Nothing much happened until Call Me Nico drove the wrong way round the Chiswick roundabout and set off down the right-hand carriageway of the M4, flashing his lights and shouting "Crazy bastards!" at oncoming cars. The wise men were alarmed, but Call Me Nico found his way to the hard shoulder, which seemed deserted.

He even managed to get into the wrong side of Heston Services without killing anyone, despite his excitement. Heston Charlton! Heston Charlton! See, I find star, I find star! How much up you me?" In a merciful silence at the Heston car park, the wise men explained to Call Me Nico that the star they sought was in the sky. "In

■ LONDON

add lanes, flyovers and

ment closed 9pm-6am at

Parliament Square and

ekends in places bety

Way for sewer construction work on Lessons Hill.

A4 Reading, Berkshire, Restrictions and lane closures for widening work between the Hogarth Roundabout and

Burfield Road.

A329M Reading, Berkshire.

One lane closed in both directions from 10am-3pm over the M4 at junction 10, between

Reading and Wokingham. 7 Brighton, Oversigh

Bridge. A23 Patcham, East Sussex

with various other local restrictions in place. M27 Hampshire. Long-term

ton East and Fareham.

A3 Surrey. Hogs Back

Lane closed on the slip roads,

roadworks with a contraflow in place between Southamp-

M25 Surrey. Restrictions and lane closures both ways

between Godstone and the A3 as major widening work continues along the 19-mile

(A31), long-term roadworks at Stag Hill flyover. Various restrictions in place.

SOUTH-WEST
 A390 Treliske Roundabout,
Truro, Corrivall, Contrallow

due to construction work.

dian Queens and Bodmir

for resurfacing work. A35 Barrack Road, Christ-

Comwall. Temporary lights

both directions for work on

M5 Gloucestershire. Major

M5 Gloucestershire, Road

works for construction of a

junction roundabout at J17

new road layout on the

roadworks with only one lane open at roundabout junc-

a new roundabout

tion with A419.

church, Dorset. Lane closed in

● SOUTH-EAST

sky is costing more, * Call Me Nico said. No, the wise men said, the star is in the sky, but the child we seek is on the ground. A new king is born today and we have brought him gifts of gold, frankincense and a plastic thing from Toys R Us that plays Jingle Bells (batteries not included).

One of the wise men was gazing at the sky through a telescope, but the huge lights of the motorway and the approaching dawn had combined to render the star nearinvisible, though now it seemed to be behind them, over west London. The wise men were glum. Call Me Nico shuffled his feet. "I got to go." he announced. "Home to Shepherd's Bush. Wife she have baby,

minute any." The wise men lacked the heart for more lurching about in the Datsun. They handed Call Me Nico £30 and walked towards the restaurant, needing coffee. But the wisest of the men stopped and turned on the others: "Call Me Nico said his wife . . .

They found the driver of a black cab, taking a break on the way back from Heathrow. "Where to, Guv?" he said. And the wise men replied: "Just follow that Datsun." Shepherd's Bush wasn't sarf of the

Waiting for your insurer's go-ahead could soon be a thing of the past, says Vaughan Freeman

ROYAL INSURANCE DIRECT REGIONAL ROAD ACCIDENT - Warwickshire Hertfordshire 12 Essex .
13 Chryd
14 Hampshire
15 Humberside.
16 Lincolnshire Cumbra ... Witshire... Bucks Berkshire

mong the last things you want for Christmas is a dent. The wing is crumpled shopping mall and the holidays loom, probably meaning weeks of delay before an insurance assessor gets within 20 miles of your vital daily transport.

But an ingenious new advideo the car so insurers can that any repairs can go ahead immediately.

Most insurance companies ment engineer views the car repair. The assessor deterthe vehicle off as scrap.

have been done for less

dent damage.

The information is then sent electronically via a BT telephone line and a modern link, to VELO's offices. Within two hours of a car arriving at a garage, a video image appears on a computer screen, together with the garage's estimate for repairing the damage

Engineers at VELO can then view the damaged car as if they were standing in front of it and make an instant and informed decision on whether the estimate is correct, or if the damage needs closer inspection on site. They can discuss the car with the garage, and if necessary order up different based accident management



accurate idea of what they are dealing with. Today, most insurance companies will give the go-shead without feeling it necessary to send out an assessing engineer for repairs likely to incur a labour charge of under £250, which will probably result in a total bill of about £625. With video images to get a more

the VELO system though, repairs which the garage initially estimates might cost anything up to £750 in labour, which would on average lead to a total repair bill of around £1,875, can be agreed over the phone.

So instead of waiting up to 48 hours for an assessor, who

charges between £30 and £40, most repairs can be authorised immediately. This mean the insurance company does not have to face the extra cost of two days' worth of car hire to cover while the damaged vehicle is out of action. Before VideoLink; almost

more than £250 in labour needed an on-site visit by an assessor. Now, says Phil York. VELO's marketing manager:: Where we have been able to give the go-ahead to repairs where the labour charge is in the £250 to £500 bracket, we have been able to do away with two-thirds of the inspections of the on-site engineer's

every repair estimated to cost

Steve Greene, one of the onscreen engineers, says: "Beengineer in, we had to pretty much take the garage's estimate on trust. Now we can get much more detail, and are

assessments.

n addition to streamlin-

ing the whole operation.

the system ensures that any owners able to convince their garage to give the car a total respray while a dented wing is sorted, or repair half-a-dozen parking bumps while genuine crash damage is repaired, will no longer be able to slide such tricks past the insurance firm. VideoLink works in conunction with VELO's El million computerised insurance processing system, known as ClaimFlow. The system, the most advanced of its kind in Europe, virtually eradicates the 30 to 300 or so bits of paper that attach to each claim. From the moment a motorist calls with details of the damage to their car, to the moment a claim form or damage estimate is sent out, not a pen

or bit of paper is touched. The ClaimFlow computers write letters instantly, keep files up to date and the 1,500 pages of documentation that arrive each day in the mail are electronically scanned in so. that all files can be viewed on computer screen rather than a grubby piece of paper.

The bits of paper are still stored in case they are needed should the claims come to court; but VELO believes that killing off the Dickensian image of insurance firms labouring on parchment with quill pens is the way to ensure competitive insurance premiums and improved customer

Contraflow across Avonmouth Bridge with a 50mph limit. Swindon, Wiltshire. Construction work on Fleming Way with restrictions be-tween the Magic Roundabout and Whalebridge.

A406 East Finchley. Traffic down to a single lane on the North Circular road be-tween Henley's comer (A1 Falloden Way) and Finch-ley High Road. A406 Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks on Angel Road (North Circular Road) MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA A6 Lockington, Leicester-shire. Contration from just north of M1 J24 to Sawley Island, with no right turn into A3 Kingston, Northbound lane closure on the Kingston Domington Lane. Bypass between Shannon Corner (A298) and Coombe A52 near Grantham, Nottinchamshire. Temporary Lane junction (A238) for work on Carters Bridge. A3212 Westminster. Bridge lights over Nottingam Road bridge. Diversions via B1174

Street and Victoria Embank A500 Staffordshire Contraflow on D-road between Talke and Stoke-on-Trent. Westminster Bridge.
A224 Saint Mary Cray.
Lane closed on Sevenoaks NORTH M6 Cheshire. Reduced to

three narrow lanes by the widening work near Thelwall Viaduct. M6 Cumbria. Contraftow with two lanes in both directions and 50mph limit be-tween J37 (Kendal) and J38 (Tebay). A62 Chadderton, Greater

Manchester: M66 construction work on Oldham Road at junction with Hollinwood Avenue. A59 Much Hoole, Lan-Liverpool Road causing (10pm-6am) maintenance work on the Brighton By-pass between Hangleton Junc-tion and Ditchling Road

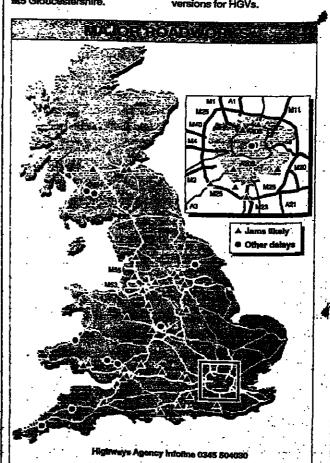
major hold-ups heading to and from Preston. M1 West Yorkshire. Major around the Leeds junction with lane and speed restrictions. Expect delays on M1, M621 and Dewsbury Road.

WALES A482 Aberaeron, Ceredigion, Upper Aberaeron

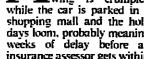
closed for reconstruction work. Diversions via Panteg Road and the A487. A470 north of Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil. Temporary lights on Brecon road for ajor works. 40mph on A465 at Cefn Coed with temp lights on Aberdare Road. M4 Monmouthshire. Lane closures between the Magor and Newport junctions. M4 Swansea. Carriagev reduced to one lane in both directions for roadworks etween Swansea and Llanelli. A472 Pontypool, Toriaen. Contratiow between Pontymoile and Heron roundabout.

Bridge on South Road

 SCOTLAND M8 Edinburgh, Junction 2 Newbridge Spur (M9). Major roadworks, with lane closures on the roundabout.
A9 Greenloaning, Perth &
Kinross. Contrellow four miles est of Dunkeld. A898 Erskine Bridge, Renfrewshire. Bridge only open to car and light vehicles. Di-versions for HGVs.







vance that turns every local garage mechanic and panel beater into a camera-equipped Steven Spielberg is slashing the time it takes for cars to be repaired, cutting costs and reducing inconvenience. Instead of waiting for an assessor to turn out, garages simply study the damage on screen. It means instant assessment so

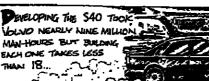
insist that a damage assessbefore work begins on a mines what has happened, which parts need to be replaced or repaired and whether it might be cheaper to write It is a highly skilled job

which takes time, often a couple of days delay. But without that assessment, motorists who give the go-ahead for repairs do so at their peril for the assessor might decide later that the car is not worth remairing or the work should Now VELO, a Marlow-

AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long



THE WORLD TO MASS PRODUCE ARCRIFT, BUILDING NEARLY 200 TRIMOTOR







Explorer: after the unremarkable Maverick, what Ford executives have had to ask themselves is whether Britain really can take yet another competitor in the 4x4 market

Explorer finally finds Britain

t is the world's best-selling offroader - but has taken six years to reach Britain. Ford has sold more than 2 million of its Explorer 4x4 vehicles in 60 countries since it was launched. America had the first vehicles in 1990, and Europe has had the Explorer in its show-rooms for the past three years.

Now Britain gets the chance to sample the 4x4, which will be the biggest off-roader with the most powerful V6 4x4 engine on sale in this country, dwarfing even the Range Rover - although not in the price department.

Ford says Britain has had to wait because of the high cost of tailoring a US-built vehicle to a market with different requirements - and the steering wheel on the "wrong" side. Converting the Explorer to righthand drive, developing the most powerful V6 engine in its class and designing the world's first five-speed automatic gearbox for an off-roader required lots of time and money.

Cynics prefer to believe the wait had more to do with Ford having its fingers burnt by its first venture into the 4x4 market in Europe with the unremarkable Maverick, a joint ven-

•

Marin acal West

ture with Nissan. Nissan builds its own Terrano and the Maverick on the same production line, but neither has captured the imagination like Land Rover's Discovery.

Now Ford faces the prospect of 4x4 buyers who want a blue oval on the bonnet upgrading from top-end Mavericks to the Explorer. Spend an extra £4,420 and 4x4 drivers can step up from the top 2.7-litre turbo-diesel Maverick with five doors to the £25,870 Explorer, which has just as much equipment - air-conditioning, twin front airbags and anti-lock brakes - as well as a more powerful engine, more space and a new five-

speed automatic transmission. Ford says the two off-roaders are aimed at different markets: the Maverick younger, the Explorer wealthier. To help define the differences, the Maverick has been relaunched with one trim level only so that Ford's 4x4 line-up ranges from the Maverick GLS (two engine options, 2.4 petrol or 2.7 diesel in three- or five-door versions) and the Explorer (4-litre V6

and five-door only).

Where the advertising campaign for the Maverick has been loud and lively and aimed at potentially youn-

ger buyers who want off-road enter- will sell the Ford Probe and Maverick tainment, Ford plans on being more alongside the new Explorer. methodical with the Explorer.

"Although Ford is a big off-road name in the United States, we need to strengthen our 4x4 credentials in Britain before we can go stampeding into the UK off-road market," ex-plains Nav Sidhu at Ford.

The company will sell just 2,500 Explorers in 1997 to help develop a level of exclusivity and maintain reasonable resale values. To draw the contrast, Ford sells up to 5,000 Mavericks a year - but second-hand values can drop as much as £5,000 in just six months.

What Ford executives have had to ask themselves is whether Britain really can take yet another competitor in the market. Dealer forecourts are already jammed with nearly new offroaders and second-hand prices are showing evidence of oversupply.

Determined that the Explorer will not suffer a similar downfall, Ford has established a network of 160 dealers dedicated to selling what it hopes will become a fashionable niche model. Developed from new and existing dealerships the "sports coupé and off-road specialist dealers"

The Explorer faces tough competition — not least of all from its fierce US adversary, the Jeep Grand Cherokee. Until now, Jeep has had the monopoly on American 4x4 sales this side of the Atlantic but battle is about to commence in this country between the arch rivals.

nlike the popular Grand Cherokee, the Explorer displays several less than endearing American characteristics: the chiming door-open warning signal that cannot be switched off, its fiddly key-operated fuel filler and its garish looks are letdowns. And it's huge bulk might prove a problem for some drivers on our tight and twisty roads. Bigger than a Range Rover, bulkier than a Shogun, the Explorer is fearsome.

Forget bulk though: the sticker price is what matters and the Explorer's £25,870 makes the Jeep Grand Cherokee's £29,550 look steep, the Land Rover Discovery's £30,690 look crazy, the Mitsubishi Shogun's £37,590 outrageous and the Range Rover's £39,715 seem ludicrous.

But there are some drawbacks, one of which is the humdrum blue oval badge. No self-respecting member of the "green wellie" brigade would be seen driving a Ford off-roader, which explains Ford's worries about the company gaining the right credentials. In a market which profits from a high degree of snobbery, Ford might have its work cut out to win

customers.

Despite costing nearly £14,000 less than a Range Rover 4.0 V8 SE, the Ford Explorer improves on the "master of off-roaders" with electric front seats, automatic transmission, electric sunroof, a more spacious boot and is a whole second swifter in a 0-60mph sprint. Nevertheless, many Range Rover owners are unlikely to convert, even if the Explorer is the world's best selling 4x4.

The competition - and what they cast: Land Rover Discovery (£19,765 to £30,690); Vauxhall Frontera (£15,470 to £20,470); Toyota RAV 4 (£14,269 to £17.261); Missubishi Shogun (£19,960 to £17,590); (Range Rover (£35,130 to £47,765); Suzuki Vitara (£10,920 to £16,200); Jeep Cherokee (£17,550 to £24,850); Jeep Grand Cherokee (£29,550 to £30,550); Nissan Terrano (£17,600 to £23,100); Ford Maverick

ROAD TEST

Very heavy, but you get a lot of car for the price

While not

exactly

agile,

it still

feels

secure

oing its rock-climbing party trick in a quarry somewhere in Scotland, the Ford Explorer had me grinning from ear to ear and my wife praying for terra firma. Nose-diving a preci-pice, it struck me that anyone with a penchant for big, butch off-roaders will love this larger-than-life American import My first reaction to the

personne, agitated and slow. lts on-road performance is no better than that of a Ford Mondeo 1.8 costing over £10,000 less. Handling and agility is nothing like so good. But that's the way it is with heavyweight off-roaders. If you want a vehicle that scrambles irresistibly on the rough

Explorer was that it felt cum-

stuff, you cannot expect it to feel like an accomplished family saloon on smooth tarmac.

Off-roaders seem at last to have saturated the urban jungle. After a decade of spectacular growth, the 4x4 peaked if this year's sales, slightly down on 1995's

at around \$8,000. are a guide. Even with the market in decline, though, Ford reckons it should have a larger slice of the action. After the success of Chrys-

ler's Jeep Cherokee, Ford was expected to promote the Explorer's "Made in the US" label. It won't Instead, it will focus on a highly competitive price of around £25,000. For this, you get a whopping five-door, five-seater, a 4.0-litre V6 engine and five-speed automatic transmission. Standard equipment includes anti-lock brakes, two airbags, powered seats, air conditioning, cruise control, even a digital compass. There are no manual or diesel alternatives. What you see here is what's on offer at 160 specialist Ford dealers.

Slotting in above the Maverick (a junior sibling by a different marriage), the chrome-wheeled, balloontyred Explorer - at 188.5ins. it's longer than a Range Rover

is a big, handsome vehicle

with lots of presence. You sit tall, all the better to see out, in scats that cosset as well as they embrace.

Legroom in the back is generous, luggage accommo-dation colossal. A doubleacting handle releases either the rear window or the tail-gate, unencumbered by a hanging spare wheel As when loading, so when clambering in and out, it's all too easy to soil your clothes on muddy sills.

By off-roader standards, the Explorer puts on a lusty display of muscle, its 206 brake horse power engine (made in Germany) giving lively acceleration. In overdrive top - which can be

- the Explorer is exceptionally long-legged and quiet. Reasonably nomical, too. The gearbox (made in France) shifts seamlessly, but the stiff selector, short on positions, discourages manual over-ride. Low-ratio drive is selected by a dash-mounted knob, eliminating the need for a sec-

ond gear lever. Big and heavy though it is, the two-ton Explorer does not feel awkwardly large on the road — except when parking. Even then, it's quite easy to manoeuvre. I liked the weighty feel of the all-disc brakes, but anyone used to a light touch may find them

disconcertingly heavy. Tough but primitive suspension denies the Explorer a smooth ride, though you do get used to the choppy motion. If not exactly agile, the car feels secure and sure-footed when hustled through wet corners. On clean Scottish tarmac, the big tyres gripped with a tenacity I suspect they would lack on emulsified

surfaces further south. If the Explorer can impress an off-roader sceptic like me. Ford will have no trouble selling its quota of 2,500. I can see prices of the opposition -Cherokee, Monterey, Discovery. Range Rover, Shogun -being cut just to compete.

EXPLORER

Engine: Four-litre V6 delivering about 206bhp through a five-speed automatic transmission with four-wheel drive. Performance: 0-60mph in 10.9 seconds, top speed 106mph; fuel consumption, urban cycle 15.5mpg, extra urban 25.4mpg, combined 20.6mpg. Size: Length 4,789mm; height 1,730mm; width 1,950mm. Equipment: Anti-lock brakes, twin airbags.

Turkey with added petrol

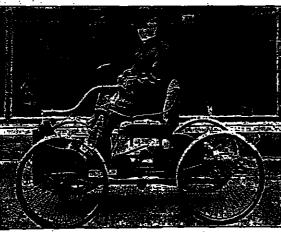
IT WAS Christmas Eve. and in the kitchen a young wife was preparing to stuff the turkey when her husband appeared in the doorway and not bearing gifts, writes Ian Morton.

Staggering slightly under the weight of a small engine and balancing a reeking can of petrol, he said he wanted to clamp the engine to the side of the sink - and could she hold the can and allow petrol to drip into the car-burctior while he cranked the engine?

Unficsitatingly, she scooped up the turkey and stuffing ingredients, then did as he had asked. Finally the engine spluttered into life. It ran for 55 seconds her husband timed it and noted it exactly.

He pronounced himself highly satisfied, unclamped the engine and carried it triumphantly off to his workshop in the shed behind the house, leaving his wife in a haze of exhaust to scrub the sink area clean of oil and petrol traces before getting on with the Christmas dinner. An understanding lady willing and able to share her man's enthusiasms, or a sadly downtrodden and fearful woman builtied by a preoccupied

and arrogant husband? Surely the former, for this



Driven man: Henry Ford on his first quadricyle

the scene was the kitchen of a rented house in Bagley Avenue, Detroit, the wife was the recently married Clara Bryant Ford and her husband the 28-year-old Henry, one of many hopefuls working round the dock in the city of automotive dreams to grab their share of the rewards as the era of mechanical mobility

took shape around them. The story of the Christmas Eve kitchen sink engine test has been related proudly by the couple's great-granddaughters. Anna and Charlotte Ford. They never saw Clara as anything other than a patient and devoted wife whose imquestioned duty was to stand by her man in the best traditions of

the American pioneers In fact Clara's willing forebearance would prove to be nothing less than a keystone in the foundations of today's feminist free doms, according to Anna

and Charlotte. "By placing herself secand she would enable those mas Eve.

of us coming after to be first," they said in a book about the Ford family. "The automobile has had an enormous effect on our society. Especially it has belped to liberate the modern woman. It did for women socially what the franchise did for women politically. The motor car gave us freedom and independence."

HENRY certainly did not regard his wife as downtrodden. Indeed his nickname for her was The Believer, because she had faith in him and encouraged him when everyone else was deriding On a number of occasions

he publicly acknowledged the debt he owed to her unswerving support, and they must have respected each other because they lived together for 49 years. The world of motoring probably owes more than might be imagined to young Clara Bryant Ford and her wifely patience on Christ-

The ultimate happy family man

hen you sit around the table over the holidays determined to amuse a squad of increasingly fractious children, you should think of the Jaques

For they invented the board games which have become a staple ingredient in the diet of Christmas entertainment. has passed the baton for six generations, so it is only fitting that John Jaques and Son is the company which invented Happy Families.

family, writes David Long.

More than 200 years in the business (during which time they also created Snakes and Ladders, Tiddly-winks and Ludo) more than justifies the Jaques' claim to be the world's oldest games makers. Today the company is equally well known for its sports equipment, which includes the table-tennis tables (a Jaques introduced Ping-Pong to Britain in 1890) and championship-level croquet sets.

In fact it was another Jagues, John II who in 1851 at the Great Exhibition first brought croquet to England. Like the rest of the family, his great-grandson Christopher is himself no mean mallet, but it is cars that arouse his passion, especially for the older Jaguars.

How did you first learn to drive?

On quiet country roads in Cornwall during our annual family holiday when I was 15 and then later, during the 1956 Suez Crisis, driving unaccompanied which learners were still permitted to do.

What was your first car?

An Austin Seven Special which I bought after selling my father's Austin Ten for £95. A local garage had offered him £60 for it and he told me I could keep anything I made in excess of that.

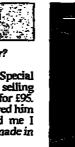
What car do you drive now, and why?

I love for its classic line and timeless shape as well as for that combination of effortless travel and silent progress. I am at a loss as to why anyone would choose a BMW or Mercedes-Benz over the homegrown product. I also have three classic Jaguars which share the same splendid XK engine -- two XK120s, one of which is a special lightweight model, and an XK140 - and a 1926 Dodge 15cwt box van similar to the ones our com-

What is your most hated car?

I would never buy a Ford.

on wheels.



(£17,650 to £21,450)

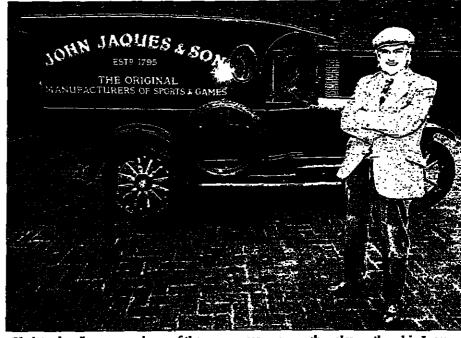
A Jaguar XJ6 Series III which

pany used between the wars.

When I was young, they were cheap and not built to last and this memory has remained with me, even though things may have changed recently.

What is your dream car?

A D-type Jaguar. The sight of these cars being raced by Mike Hawthorn, Tony Brooks and Stirling Moss is etched on my mind. They looked like aircraft



Christopher Jacques and one of the company vans - rather slower than his Jaguars

What is your worst habit in the car?

Rudely pushing out of junctions into a stream of traffic /hich will not let me in.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

Centre-lane cruisers on the motorway and crawlers around the country roads of Sussex where I live.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in

vour car? Driving my lightweight XK120 John Dunn on Radio 2 and

at 125mph down the Mulsanne also Radio 5 for sport.

Straight to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Jaguar's 1951 Le Mans win, and last month I took a 1903 Panhard underneath Constitution Arch at Hyde Park Corner. The route through is usually closed to

Have you ever had points on your licence?

Who hasn't! Yes, all for speed-

ing through traps and so on.

What do you listen to in your car?

Mostly Radio 4, occasionally

State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?

If you were the Secretary of

Make local authorities ban petrol and diesel vehicles from iown centres during certain times, introduce compulsory schemes for out-of-town parking and take steps to improve public transport.

What is your favourite car advertisement?

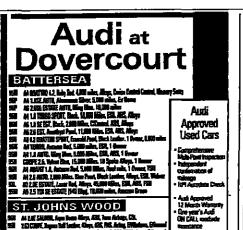
The ones for the Renault Clio, although I do not spend much time watching television and suspect that were I to do so repetition would render even these unwatchable.

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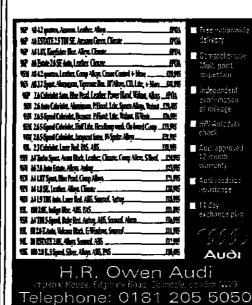
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A British restoration classic

Behind the wheel of an impeccably rebuilt 1974 MGB. **Eve-Ann Prentice**

urn back

found that the years rolled away

and a lost age when driving a car was fun returned



BORN to be wild wildish), the MGB GTV8 heads out on the highway looking for adventure. In pristine British

Racing Green with chrome which manages to glint even in the fogthreatening gloom of mid-Decem-ber Cotswolds, the 1974 MG was raring to go on one of its first outings since being totally rebuilt.

Pulling away from the Oxfordshire offices of British Motor Heritage, which stripped back the years and made the car new once more during two days at the National Classic Motor Show in Birmingham last month, the gutsy engine growled like Eartha Kitt.

This weekend the energetic bornagain 22-year-old belongs to someone who paid just II for the privilege, after the car was raffled for charity by Heritage and Motorcare Services. Last week she was mine, all mine, for a few toofleeting miles and one deeply embarrassing hiccup for both of us.

Snuggling into the seat, and relearning the venerable technology which makes you remember to flip the indicators off as well as on, I was peering round the steering-wheel to check that the headlamp light was on to announce our presence in the crepuscular halflight as we slowed to approach as

Nothing coming from the right, so a shift to second ready to pull away - and I have stalled, cutting off that lovely throaty engine in its prime. Then horror. Whisps of blue-black smoke curl from beneath the bonnet and an ominously acrid smell seeps into the car.



DAVID James, leader of the team which carried out the rebuild, did his best to look nonchalant and not scramble too

quickly from the passenger seat as he released the bonnet catch. Dialling mission control from his mobile phone while simultaneously scouring the glistening engine compartment, a look of barely-disguised relief flooded his face and he aborted the call back to HQ.

A rogue wire had fallen on to the hot exhaust and melted, probably jolted out of place by the ignominious stall, I silently conjectured.

From then on, the prospective drama turned out to be merely a momentary hitch. Driving the MGB GTV8 is like being given the elixir of youth, the years roll away and the fun of driving returns; none of this automatic gear-changing, electronically-controlled ease of today which robs you of the sense of really riding all those horse-power. The MGB's steering is exhilaratingly responsive, while the road-holding is reassuring. The whole package is like driving a

sophisticated grown-up's go-kart.
The MGB GTVS was the most powerful of the production MGBs and just 2,591 were built between April 1973 and June 1976, all of them for the British market. The one raffled on Monday was made in 1974 and is believed to have had just one owner. For the past six years she has slumbered in a garage, like Sleeping Beauty waiting for British Motor Heritage to act the Prince.

British Motor Heritage, owned by Rover, makes essential parts to keep classic cars on the road, including new bodyshells such as that used to rebuild the MGB

ANGELA Rippon. Sting and Viscount

Linley have had one

love in common -

the MGB. They all

owned models of the

quintessential British two-seater

sports car which mirrored the new

egalitarianism of the 1960s, writes

Everyone wanted one. Intro-

duced at the 1962 motor show, it

was the heir to 40 years of motoring

success emanating from Morris Garages. Yet just 18 years of life

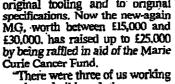
The MG was the brainchild of

Cecil Kimber - new general man-

ager of the erstwhile staid Morris Garages — who captured the flap-

were left to the MG company.

Eve-Ann Prentice.



on the rebuild and there was a

GTV8 at the Birmingham show. The parts are produced using original tooling and to original specifications. Now the new-again MG, worth between £15,000 and

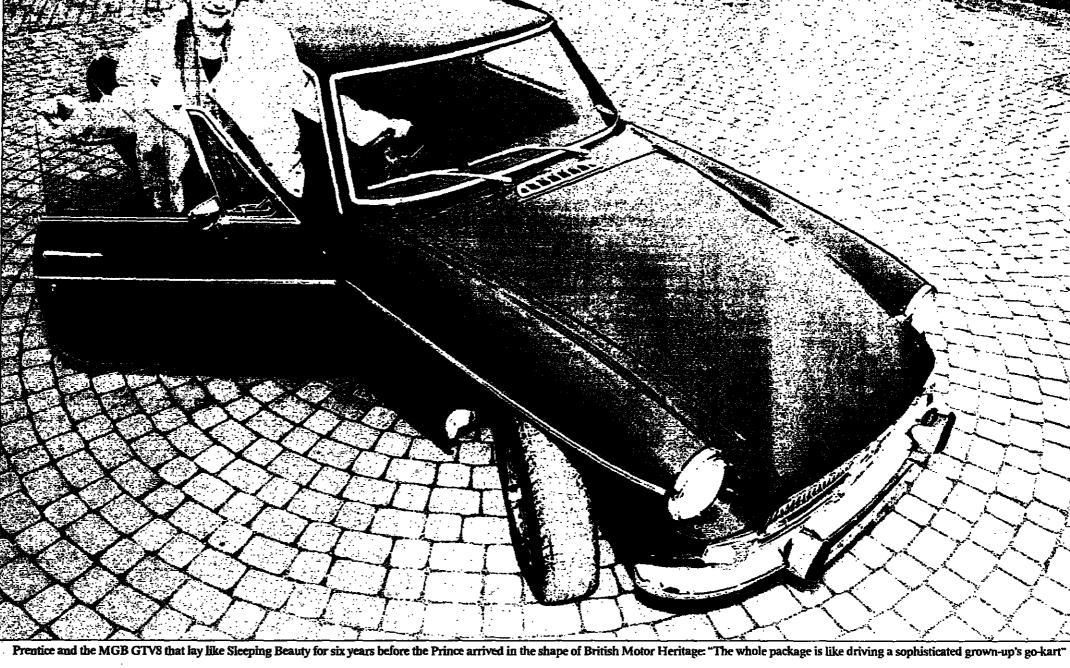
There were three of us working

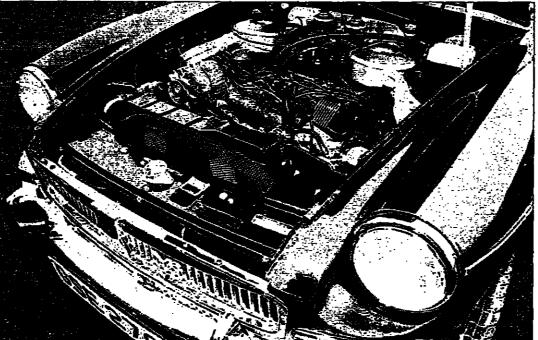
constant crowd watching," says James, "It took from 10.30 on the Saturday until 3.30 on the Sun-day." British Motor Heritage groups classic car retailers and suppliers under an umbrella organisation, the Association of Heritage Approved Specialists, some of which helped in the V8's rebirth. Engine and gearbox were courtesy

of Engine Machine Services at Worksop and the rear axle was reconstructed by Moss Europe in London, for instance.

Brian Cameron. Managing Director of British Motor Heritage at Witney in Oxfordshire, says he tries to "inculcate that we are not in the car industry, but in the leisure industry". Owning a classic car should be an enjoyable experience, he says. "It could be a boat or ponies for the children, instead we want people to see driving classic cars as a leisure activity."

British Motor Heritage is the commercial arm of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust which also runs the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon, Warwickshire, Britain's largest purpose-designed motor museum. The museum houses more than 200 vehicles as well as more than four million engineering drawings.





"That lovely throaty engine growled like Eartha Kitt — until I stalled and cut it off in its prime"

MGB GTV8

Engine: 3.5-litre V8 engine fuelled by twin SU carburettors to give 137bhp at 5,000rpm. Four-speed manual gearbox with overdrive. Performance: 0-60mph in 8.6 seconds, 0-100mph in 25.3 seconds. Top speed 124mph. Average fuel consumption 23.5mpg.

Price: £1,925 at launch in 1973 and £3,317 when discontinued in 1975. The pristine model, complete with indicators which must flipped off as well as on, totally rebuilt by British Motor Heritage, is valued at between £15,000 and £30,000.

Enduring spirit of the Twenties MGs swung with the Sixties and

An MGB from the early Sixties, when everybody wanted to own one

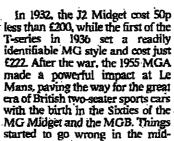
peresque spirit of the Twenties by converting a four-cylinder Morris Cowley into a two-seater and having it painted in pastel shades. In 1924, a converted Bulinose Morris was given the designation MG for the first time. The sports cars proved so profitable that MG moved into a new factory at

Abingdon in 1929, making way for

the flood of models to come.

remain sports cars

of ultimate style



1970s when British Leyland had no new engine to meet growing American anti-pollution laws and dollarsterling fluctuations made the cars ludicrously expensive in the US.

British Leyland, under Sir Michael Edwardes, pulled the plug on MG - but up to 100,000 MGs were thought to be on Britain's roads when Rover launched the MG RVS

Vaughan Freeman meets the owner of an unstoppable MGB GT

Even more miles to go

CLASSICS don't always need cos-setting: Richard Monk has covered at least 230,000

miles since he bought his beloved MGB GT second-hand two decades ago, proof, if any were needed, that the place for cars with heart is not the dusty death of a motor museum, but out on the open road.

Richard drives his 1974 V8 engined MGB GT sports car every day as his commuter car. has holidayed with it in France. Germany and Spain, and also driven all over Britain in it for his job as assistant club secretary for the MG Owners' Club. When he bought the car in 1975,

it was 18 months old and had already covered 17,000 miles. Now it has "gone round the clock" twice and shows no signs of slowing down. What is more, he says, of the 45,000 MG Owners' Club members he estimates around 30,000 use their cars, as he does, day in. day out. The car has had a couple of breakdowns, but nothing that could not be fixed at the roadside. And costs are nothing like as prohibitive as might be thought. Fully comprehensive insurance cover, with maximum no-claims bonus, is £230 a year, and because the MG has always been such a popular car, parts are

plentiful and reasonably priced. There is also the advantage that such cars, if used as company cars, offer huge tax incentives since their personal tax in kind liability is based on their original purchase price. Additionally, depreciation on an MG is minimal. Most cars that are bought new lose a third of their value in the first year, at the rate of around £100 a week for an average family saloon. Prices for used MGs remain constant, and indeed the first examples of the latest Rover MGF which went on sale recently actually sold for more than when they first left the showroom.

Richard says: "My car is not in concours condition, but it is very presentable, and has done approximately 230,000 miles. It has proved very reliable. It has had the odd breakdown, which you would expect given the sorts of



Monk and his MGB GT: "Reliability was always pretty good"

mileages it has covered, but nothing irrecoverable. With a car such as this, if you break down at the side of the road you are far more likely to be able to fix it, because the design is so simple. With a modern car, you open the bonnet, and there is a whole load of electronics and computers staring back at you, and there is nothing you can do except shut the bonnet again."

DEPENDING on the time he has to spare. Richard works on the car himself, but the huge numbers of

garages specialising in MGs mean that getting it serviced professionally is easy and relatively inexpensive, even if services, around every 3,000 or 4,000 miles, are more frequent than on more modern vehicles.

Richard concedes that some classic cars can pose problems for the unwary buyer. "It's true that in some instances classic cars are held together with string and chewing gum." The trick he says is in buying a car which was. when new, a strong design, and

has been cared for since. "With the MG, the reliability do their own work and are fairly competent at it, but on top of that there is a fairly good network of parts outlets and repair shops.

The MG is a particularly strong car, with a monocoque construction and strong chassis rails running the length of it, so that even if it doesn't have modern equipment like an airbag, I certainly feel safe driving one."

Are such cars, though, built when working heaters were for wimps and cabins boasted all the draught-proofing of a wind-blasted barn, suitable for today's pampered drivers? Richard believes they are, and is not averse to a bit of pampering himself. He has had electric windows fitted to his MGB, and says: "We have got involved in developing all sorts of products to enhance the car's handling and suspension, as well

as its comfort. For example we have developed a high-efficiency lan for the MGB so that it pumps out more heat. You can get kits to improve the suspension and the handling. as well as electric window kits."

tion of an older car? Richard says: "I was first attracted to the car by its classic lines. I liked the look of it and the way it goes, and with factor was always pretty good. A the V8 engine it can keep up w most of today's modern cars." the V8 engine it can keep up with

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日日 TAXIS BTIPPERS \$ 60 TO BACK OFQUEUE

RANDOM TO

Safely in the lap of luxury

ROADTEST

drivers. But the updated 960

range shows that when the

Swedish manufacturer turns

its mind to making you cosy

and comfortable as well as

safe it does so with the same

efficiency.
The 960 is one of those

models which bears the heavy

burden of being known as a

ed to incorporate all the vir-

tues of a marque and then

offer something extra. What it

offers, in anything but its most

basic form, is an interior

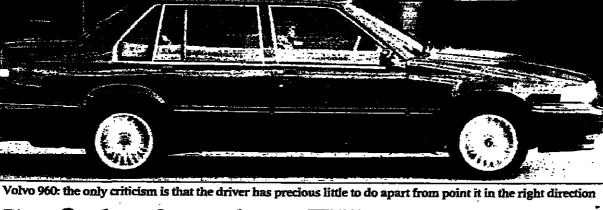
reeking of leather and walnut,

'flagship" - somehow expect-

THINK of a Volvo and what springs to mind? Not long ago the immediate image was of a big, heavy car bristling with safety features and probably being driven at a speed guaranteed to ensure that none of them would ever be needed, writes Alan Copps. But the company has revamped its image more radically than most. The middleaged tank has been replaced and a dash of sporting style has been mixed with that re-

ticality and legendary safety. Unashamed luxury, however, is not likely to figure very high on the list of most Volvo

putation for robustness, prac-



VOLVO 960 CD Engine: 24-valve, three-litre, six-cylinder producing 204bhp at 6,000rpm. Transmission: Four-

speed automatic with settings for sport, for maximum performance; economy, for fuel efficiency; and winter, to minimise wheelslip. Performance: Max speed 130mph; 0-62 mph in 9.1 seconds. Price: £28,365.

seats you sink into and almost everything you can think of onerated electrically - climate control, driver's seat adjustment, sunroof, windows and mirrors. All models have antilock brakes, driver's airbag, side airbags and five three-

Volvo has gone to a lot of

trouble transferring the tech-nology which has livened up its 850 range so successfully to the heavier 900-series. Aluminium and light alloys have been used extensively and the

result is a stiffer and more responsive chassis without the roll so often associated with limousine-size cars. The three-litre six-cylinder engine pulls the whole package along smoothly and surprisingly quickly, getting from 0-62mph in 9.2 seconds. While the automatic transmission

with sport, economy and winter modes is one of the most versatile on the market. It is a perfectly packaged up-market saloon and it more or less drives itself. That is possibly the one criticism that can be offered of

this "flagship". After all the effort that Volvo has put into its new image as a "driver's car", the 960 leaves a driver precious little to do apart from point it in the right direction.

performance and design ahead of its time, the Nissan Micra (93K to 96N) is a big hit with used car buyers, reports CAP Black Book, Matched to its eminently useful mini-size. is the Nissan's well-founded reputation for quality and refinement. Also cheap to run and maintain, Micra represents excellent second-hand value. Buy of the week is the average mileage 1.0L three-door Micra, likely to be priced at around £5,000. The automatic version is highly regarded and always in short supply, a situation which usually sees the autos demanding, and getting, a £500 premium over equivalent manuals.

LOOK FOR County versions from 1982 have improved comfort, trim, recaning front seets and soundproofing. Cers with power steering and the post-79 car with 3.5-litre V8 engine also make good buys. Check it has been regularly resprayed and cleaned to hold off chessis rot. An old good 'un fetches more than a poor young 'un. Condition is more important. un. Condition is more importa than age and mileage. litre GLX petrol, with a typical

SAFETY RATING
Bumpers like building
girders tend to make
mincernest of the
solity curved bodywork

are panny to choose from) and long (110-inch) wheelbase for versatility and as a pick-up, seven versatility and as a pick-up, seven settlent and 12-seat station wagon (though passengers need to be hardy), with 2.3, 2.6 and 3.5-time V8 petrol, patrol 2.9 titles of seven petrol.

Cover from AA Insurance (0800 444777) on a V8 1979 Series III costs a 55-year-old professional, male or female, living in Winchester with full no claims borrus, £39 a year fully comprehensive. A 22-year-old male, with one year no claims living in south London pays £551, and a similar female pays £432. PRICES
Expect to pay around
£4,500 for a Series II
in excellent condition,
£2,500 for a roadworth

BAD NEWS
Compared to
Compared to
modern cars, the
Series III comes
from another world
of prehistorically unrefined
motoring. Motorway journeys
are hideously noisy and slow,
the ride is chasticingly firm. A
stot for a radio was the car's
concession to creature.

Models with rust in the engine builthead and along the door tops. Sills can also be prone to rot and check rear crossmember especially

careatury. Critical for accessive play in the steering and for worn tyres, which are costly. Gearbox white is normal but particularly noisy transmissions can mean bills ahead.

crossmember especially carefully. Check for exce

Despite its age, the styling of of Land Rovers never dates so the Series it has massive street cred. It is tough and durable but its main attraction lies in the fact that this is a car that is superbly equipped and capable of doing the job for which it was designed: going off-road, A classic, and it has the spare wheel on the bonnet.

THE SEE TIMES

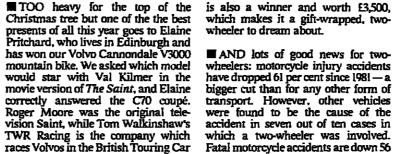
HAPPYXMAS! THANK YOU FOR NOT STAND well back on the school run RUNNINGUS because that tame-looking diesel-OVER IN 1996 powered "rattle and roller" could be a

monster. Volkswagen this week unveiled a Golf racer (right), astonishingly, powered by diesel. Using the same kind of power pack which mums and dads use everyday in their hatchbacks, this racing version pulls 170 brake horse power.

Turbo-charging and fuel injection modifications, with a new catalytic converter system, cut down on smoke while uprating means the diesel is only will app four horse power lighter than the carrier.



famed VR6 petrol engine. Fuel economy is said to be better than the standard production 110bhp engine, which powers the current Passat and will appear soon in the Sharan people



Championship series. The Cannondale

have dropped 61 per cent since 1981 - a bigger cut than for any other form of transport. However, other vehicles were found to be the cause of the accident in seven out of ten cases in which a two-wheeler was involved. Fatal motorcycle accidents are down 56 per cent, while serious injuries are down 67 per cent. Apparently, eight out of ten motorcyclists also own a car, raising the awareness of the needs of two-wheeled road users.

■ AND lots of good news for two-

wheelers: motorcycle injury accidents

wheeler to dream about.

FORECOURT

■ PLEASING looks, perky

The Micra topped its rivals by heading the supermini category of the 1996 Top Gear/JD Power survey of owner satisfaction and reliability. Best to avoid the L3litre SLX since lower specified models represent better value.

MAT THE other end of the scale, the Mitsubishi Space Wagon stakes a claim as a cheap, seven-seater heavy-weight. The Space Wagon shares the toughness of its Mitsubishi Shogun offroading cousin but suffers from lack of reputation. Well built, accommodating, and slow depreciating, best buy is any diesel model, or the 1.8-

example being a 1995M with average miles, costing £12,995. and fancy plastic mouldings most cars carry. The in-built strength and four-wheel-drive grip makes the car inherently safe, though inside there are lots of worrying sharp edges and no airbag. which makes it a gift-wrapped, two-

LAND ROVER

(prices include VAT); clutch assembly £285; full exhaust £390; front shock absorber £45; front brakepads (peir) £80; alternator £90 (exchange); starter motor £185 (exchange); starter

model in need of some cosmetic and mechanical attention, and \$800 for a car that is running but which needs extensive work.

CAND HOVER When Land Rover launched its first vehicle in 1948, doors were an optional extra. The Series III, launched in 1972 and discontinued in 1984, carried on that same no-frills tradition. Hugely strong, this is the cer that features on most television documentaries where datedevil

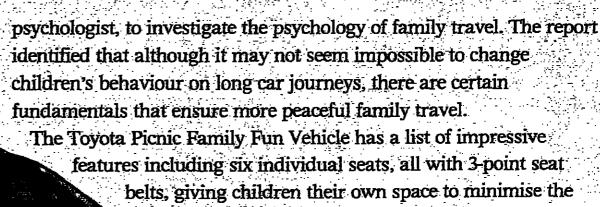
cer that features on most television documentaries where dateded wildlifers motor into unknown lands. The Range Rover and Discovery are effete and degenerate softies by comparison. Cuboid, boxy and uncomfortable, if the Series III cannot get over it, it will go through it.

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

With El7,200 Loyota Picnic HHV

The Times offers a successible chance to win every family's dream car - the new Toyota Figure Family Fun Vehicle which will be going on sale in the UK for the last time in January. The six-seater vehicle has been designed with the aim of making travelling with children a

happy and combutations perience for everyone in the ear. While working on the new car's developments Royal and assioned a report by a leading



risk of irritation. Safety features include dual air bags and side impact beams. There are a total of 17 different seat combinations and a power outlet in the rear — essential for the kids' personal stereo on that long car journey. For your chance to win this superb vehicle, collect four tokens from

The Times and complete the entry form below.

For your charter to win the Toyeta Picna: collect four differently remotestal tolers from the seven which have appeared in The Times since Saturday December 14 Token Seven appears right Send them with the completed entry form us. The Times Toyota

Picnic Competition, Ashentree Court, Landon ECS SNG: The closing date is first post Friday January 17. 1997. If you missed any tokens, you can get up to two by sending a SAE, before January 6, to: The Times Toyofa Token Request, PO Box 490, London El 9DW.

THE TIMES/TOYOTA COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

Attach four differently numbered Toyota Picnic tokens from The Times, answer the question below and complete the tie-break.

Post this form to: The Times/Toyota Competition, Ashentree Court

nich one of the following age groups do you tall into? (Please tick box) □ 1) 15-24 □ 2) 25-34 □ 3) 35-44 □ 4) 45-54 □ 5) 55-64 □ 6) 65Tie-break: please state in no more than 12 words why you would like to win the Toyota Picnic

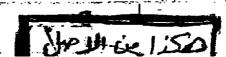
high national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (46 copies) during the we

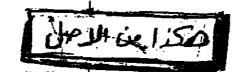
Which regional delity newspaper(s) do you buy occasionally (3 copies or less) during the week?

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do ou buy regutarly (2-4 copies a month)

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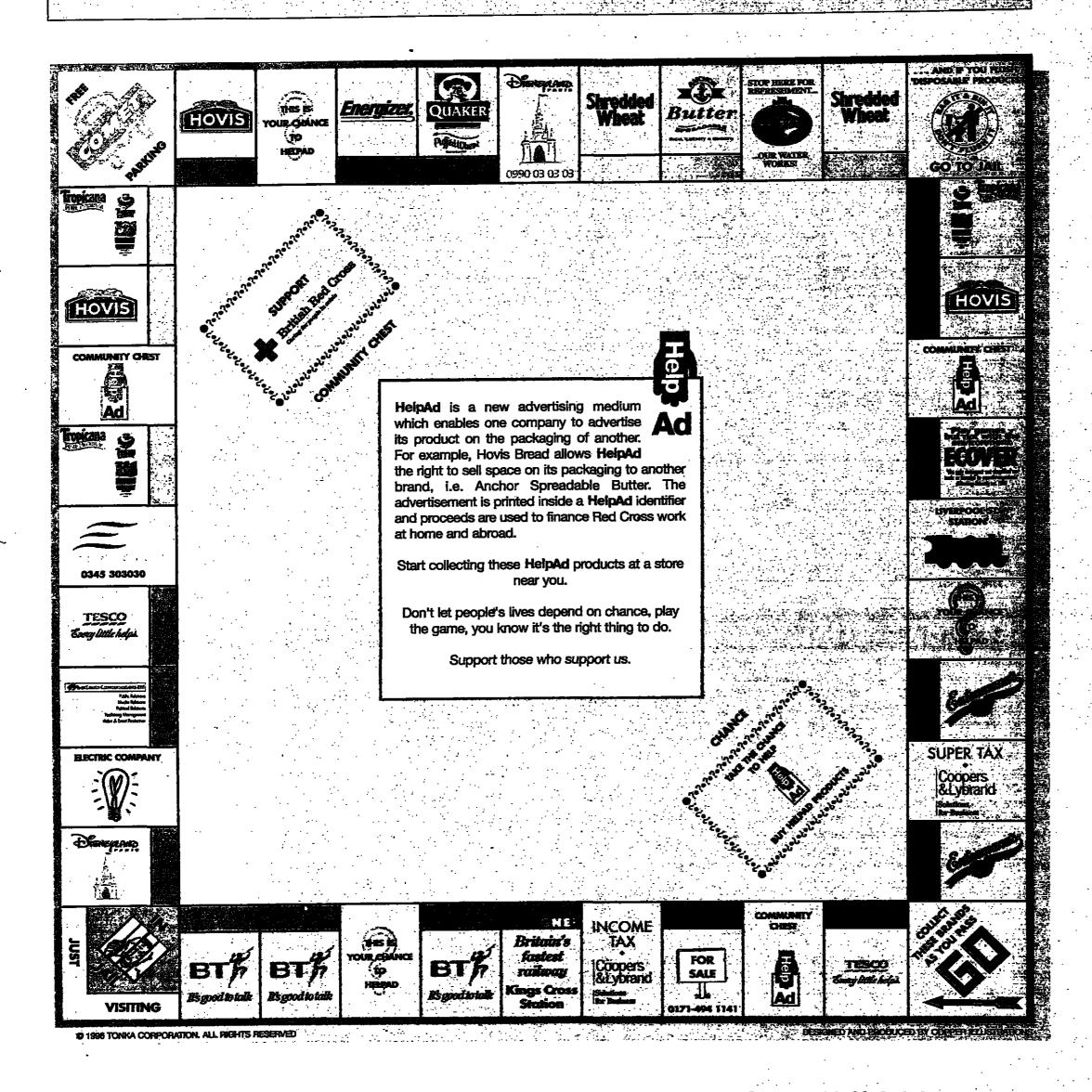
CHANGING TIMES





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